

Death March kara Hajimaru Isekai Kyusoukyoku

Book 12

(デスマーチからはじまる異世界狂想曲)

Death Marching to the Parallel World Rhapsody

Ainana Hiro

(愛七ひろ)

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Artist : shri

Story Description:

Suzuki, an adult programmer, suddenly notice that he's thrown into another world wearing a casual clothes at level 1. He gained high level and treasures after using the 3-times-disposable-magic, Meteor Shower, once. After that he intend to do another world "sightseeing tours"? Meeting 3 beast girls, beautiful purple and black haired sisters and an eccentric blond haired elf girl along with various people during his trip. Although occasionally fighting demon and demon lord, this is a heartwarming fantasy story at heart.

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

Transation source can be found here: [Link](#)

Web Novel Volume 15

15-1. To the Weasel Empire

*

Satou's here. In my primary school days, I remember asking my parents and teachers what kind of plant is [wayside grass] from the catchwords [do not eat wayside grass]. I remember their troubled faces, but I don't have any memory of their answers.

<TLN: It's an expression that means 'don't loiter on the way'.>



"....■■ Laser."

Sera's mid level light magic shot through the swarm of Soldier Ogre Ants and got repelled by the barrier of General Ogre Ant on the back.

We're currently inside a huge nest of the master of a monster dominion located between Makiwa Kingdom and Weasel Empire, the Huge Queen Ant.

We found the dominion was saturated to the point of verging into a stampede when we on the way to the Weasel Empire, so we went here to prune it while also leveling up my companions.

Currently the late-start troupe is fighting on the front, while the regular members are watching on the back.

It should be about time for the [Weasel Merchant] to fulfill his promise, but the merchant hasn't come to the promised Dejima Island even now. Thus we were going to tour the remote regions of the Weasel Empire until the merchant went to Dejima Island, but due to the reason earlier, we ended up loitering in this underground nest.

"....■■■■ Air Hammer."

Zena-san's magic pushed back the giant ants that were approaching them.

"As expected, mid class magic are resisted by higher ranked enemies aren't they. ■...."

"That seems to be the case--"

"....■■■ <<Wind Protection>>"

Zena finished her second spell while Sera began her next spell.

Invoking magic at such speed, even though they're lower class spells, is not normal, it's thanks to the [Chant Shortening] skill Zena-san learned from Sera-san recently.

The wind wall repelled the crystal arrows shot by the enemies' rear guard, Zena-san shot down the fireballs fired by the Magic Ogre Ant with the Anti Magic Rifle installed on the other end of her long wand.

In the meantime, Zena-san already started to chant her third spell.

It seems Zena-san has established her specific position by relying on the lower magic [Magic Shield].

Its guard is paper thin compared to Nana's standard [Physical Shield] and Ninja Tama's [Evasion Shield], so looking at her makes me feel anxious.

"....■ Photon Laser"

Sera's advanced light magic mows down the Soldier Ogre Ant swarms, and tears the General Ogre Ant's barrier that was giving orders on the back.

The glittering spectrum on the wall of the barrier inside the dark tunnel is quite beautiful.

"Now's our chance desuwa!"

『Karina-dono, it's still too early!』

Lady Karina activated Flickering Movement, rushing toward the ant swarm.

Raka the [<<Intelligent Item>>] tried to stop her in a hurry, but Lady Karina had already jumped before the enemies.

Two Knight Armored Ogre Ants that are protecting the General Ogre Ant push their shields toward Lady Karina.

"How impudent, desuwa!"

She kicks the upper part of the shield with her beautiful leg, and then she makes a lovely jump by using the enemy that has broken their posture as a stool.

Arisa who was acting as the peanut gallery shouted, "She used the ant as a stooooool!" out loud, but nobody reacted since Arisa raising odd voice was just the usual.

She looked a bit lonely, I'll care for her a bit later on.

".... ■■■■ Air Hammer"

Zena-san's wind magic blew away the Claymore Ogre Ant that was going to attack Lady Karina as she landed.

Unfortunately, the Heavy Soldier Ogre Ant that was on the opposite side resisted the storm created by Zena-san.

"Raka-san!"

『Acknowledged.』

A whirlpool of spiral light appears on Lady Karina's hand with the magic tool Raka controlling it.

"Karinaaaaaa, break!"

While shouting out loud, Lady Karina's fist clad with light infringes upon the Heavy Soldier Ogre Ant.

The Magic Ogre Ants and Archer Ogre Ants at the deepest part took attacking positions while making screeching noises.

『Karina-dono!』

"Yes, Raka-san--"

Lady Karina rotates once while leaving a spinning top-like afterimage clad in light.

The dance of her ringlet hair clad in light is quite beautiful to look at.

"--Breakeeeeer, shooooooooot!"

Shot with the centrifugal force, the spiral bullet pierced through the Heavy Soldier Ogre Ant and crushed the Magic Ogre Ant with a flash.

"Karina, it's dangewrours~?"

"You'll get surrounded nodesu!"

Tama and Pochi who are being carried under Liza's arms are flailing around trying to go help Lady Karina.

"It's alright you two."

The two look up at Liza with blank expressions as Liza guides their line of sight toward the group who has appeared behind the enemy line.

"Everyone, I'm sorry for being late. Golem Shield Unit, forward!"

--MVA!

Responding to Princess Shistina's order, the golems equipped with great shields close their distance with the ants.

Hikaru and Nana who were with the princess are standing behind her.

The ants that were trying to encircle Lady Karina went into disarray with the appearance of the new opponents.

『Now's the time! Karina-dono.』

"Yes, Raka-san!"

Lady Karina kicked one Heavy Soldier Ogre Ant with a roundhouse kick and jumped back here with hassou tobi knack.

<TLN: From Minamoto Yoshitsune's legend. Literally means "Eight boat jump".>

"Karina-sama, your assault was too early. Even if you have solid Raka's protection, it's by no mean perfect. What would you do if you got seriously injured and left with scars?"

Sera scolded Lady Karina's recklessness.

『Sera-dono, I apologize on behalf of my master.』

"Since Raka-dono is Karina-sama's supervisor, you have to restrain her well or else--"

"Sera-sama, please leave the scolding after the battle. Her highness is on her wit's end."

Zena-san who was diverting the ants with lower class wind magic told Sera-san and started her next magic chant.

"I'm sorry Zena. You're not injured anywhere right Karina-sama?"

"I-I'm sorry...."

"As long as you're not injured, please don't worry. It'll be bad if you're scarred before you can become Satou-san's bride right."

"....B-bride."

Lady Karina's face reddened to hear Sera.

I don't have any such plan right now.

"Mwu, Satou."

Mia who's beside me rubs her head on me.

Seeing that, Arisa tried to rub her head too, but since she was aiming at a delicate place, I lightly guarded her and continued looking at the battle.



"What's wrong, Satou."

"Ah, there's a bit--"

Just when the mid-boss battle ended to an extent, I found some luminous points with strange movements.

I ask Hikaru to take care of Lady Karina and the others as I check the details of the luminous points.

The luminous points are the spy group from Makiwa Kingdom that I had found earlier before we came here.

Apparently they tried to infiltrate into the Weasel Empire and failed.

I invoke space magic [Clairvoyance] to look at the spy group's state.

--Gegeh, grotesque.

It's truly as the saying goes, "A beast never miss a corpse."

It seems Makiwa spy group and the guard unit of Weasel Empire match each other, bodies from both parties are lying on the national border.

Looks like the last two of them are facing off right now.

The Weasel Empire's black panther rider seems to have the slight upper hand.

Even though I said black panther, it's not a normal animal, it's a monster called Shadow Ripping Panther which has screw like magic tool installed on its head, it's moving very shrewdly.

I cancel [Clairvoyance] since I'm not into watching people fight to death. I'm not going to interfere spies killing each other.



"Nyu~?"

"Tama, what's wrong nodesu?"

Tama and Pochi who were giving some drinking supplement and towel to Lady Karina during the umpteenth break time were conversing as such.

"W-wait, is some greater demon going to appear?"

Tama shakes her head to deny Arisa's question which somehow coaxed with anticipation.

"Feel that someone is calling me~"

It appears Tama doesn't really understand it herself, she tilts her head and her whole body while thinking hard.

I tried to listen carefully, but I couldn't hear anything even with the reinforcement from [Attentive Ear] skill.

"Then, why don't we go see it. Hikaru, please take care of things here."

"Un, leave it to me."

I entrusted everything here to Hikaru and teleported away to the entrance

of the nesting hole.

"Do you know what it is?"

"Nyu~"

Tama who's riding on my shoulder folds her arms and frowns.
It shouldn't have been the ant's scream.

We wait for a while as is.

"This way~"

Tama whose ears twitched suddenly jumped, pointed at somewhere and ran.

She's changed her clothing to ninja costume before I knew it.

Since she's moving like a ninja by jumping from branch to branch, I carry Pochi on my shoulder and follow her with Sky Drive.

Unlike Liza who has learned Sky Drive recently, it seems Pochi who has just been able to do Sky Steps can't keep up with Tama when she's serious.

"Something was there just now nodesu."

Pochi mutters so and looks behind.

I felt sensing-type barrier when we passed through the Weasel Empire's border.

The Makiwa spy group from earlier was probably caught in this barrier and got intercepted.

I use [All Map Exploration] while following Tama.

This place seems to be a territory called [Weasel Empire, Sixth Parish].

There's one city and two mine towns, among the numerous highways that connect them to the city, there's a main one that link the north and south

of the territory, there are only a few villages that are situated along the road to those towns.

No matter how you look at it, there's too few farm villages needed to supply food to the urban areas.

Next, I look at the other group of luminous points on the map.

It seems a group riding demonic wolves has departed from the nearby fort. They're quite fast--some additional Elder Parakeet Riders have also departed to act as scouts.

I take out a small blimp for decoy from my storage and make it fly toward the territory's capital. Since it's used as a decoy and disturbance, I've filled it with hydrogen instead of helium.

Tama is heading toward one of the relay villages along the road that I found earlier.

The movement of the luminous point on the map look strange--.

"Master, there's smell of blood at the front nodesu."

When Pochi is still talking, I teleport ahead of Tama to the destination.

There's a black panther from earlier in the center of the village enveloped with bloody smell.

It seems the one who was riding it had died together with Makiwa Kingdom's spy, there's no one that fits the rider around on the map.

I quickly use magic for disguising, transforming myself into blond haired Makiwa Kingdom man and Pochi to tigerkin girl.

"Pochi, you can use magic potions. Save the injured people."

"Yes nanodesu!"

I stitch the black panther, whose claws are painted red, in the air with the

space magic [Binding Entangle].

"To the village elder! Gather the injured at the center of the village!"

I shout out loud using weasel language with the help of [Loud Voice] skill. I use healing magic while walking, prioritizing the ones who are badly injured.

There are a lot of villagers who are so injured they can't walk, but since the attacks were aiming at their legs, there's no casualty. It seems the black panther has received combat training to incapacitate its enemies. 30% of the population are weaselkin, the other 30% are lizardkin, the rest are all various beastkin.

I heal the frightened villagers while thinking so.

"Master~?"

Tama approaches while carrying a catkin child on her back. The child's clothes are dirty with blood, her back is badly torn. It seems her injury has been healed with the magic potion Tama gave her.

"This child was crying."

"I see, you did great Tama."

I pat Tama's head as she puts the child on the ground. She shouldn't have been able to hear it judging from the distance--Or so I thought, when I checked Tama's skills, her Gift column had been added with [Insect Notification].

Obtaining congenital skill (Gift), just how....

Well, guess it's fine since it seems useful.

"Myu."

"Mom!"

A catkin aunty rushed out of the villagers, hugged the child and thanked us while bowing her head.

Then an elderly weaselkin carrying a wand appeared from behind them and urged them to go back to the villagers.

"We wish to express our gratitude for saving our village from predicament."

The elderly weaselkin said it haughtily, or rather, with full of suspicion.

"You are not someone from the fort. Just who are you people."

"I'm just a meddlesome retired crêpe merchant from Echigo."

<TLN: Reference to Mito Komon.>

It'd be problematic if I revealed our identities since we were illegal trespassers, so I spoofed some random ones.

"Crêpe merchant? Never heard of such products... Don't tell me you're not from the central, are you foreigners?"

"That's right--"

The elderly weaselkin makes a sour face when I nod.

"Don't you know that this country has been closed off? You'd be massacred by the people of the fort if they found you even with children along. If you need anything, no, we can't offer you everything, but for our benefactors we can at least prepare something you require."

"Then, tell me about this country."

I asked for information instead since asking goods from a poor village would be too much.

"I cannot answer something so vague. This place is the 17th relay village of

the sixth parish of Weasel Empire, do you seek that kind of information?"

I assent the weaselkin elder who asked for confirmation.

"The nine parishes on the outer edge of the Weasel Empire, including this, are territories that have been discarded by the emperor. To the emperor who has abandoned his faith, we who cannot abandon ours must be useless."

I can't swallow his story whole, but I'll add it on the memo pad for Weasel Empire.

"Are you prohibited from going outside the territory?"

"No, we are not. It is simply impossible in practice."

"Impossible? Can't you just go on the highway while avoiding monster dominions to escape to other territory?"

"The highways are only connected to other 『Parish』, the same as here. We the castoffs have talked and come to a consent, but there is no highway that leads to any territory besides the 『Parish』. And if you fly in the sky--"

Explosion sound reverberated from the northwest direction of the village in the middle of the elderly weaselkin's talk.

The surprised villagers crouch down and look at the direction of the sound.

The blimp I released earlier probably exploded.

"It seems there were some people who have infiltrated. There are several small forts inside and on the border of the parish. The imperial army from these forts have screw-tamed flying monsters and cannon trees, they shoot down anyone flying like such."

I see, this [Parish] is like a country inside a country, or rather it's treated like a penal colony huh.

I asked the elderly weaselkin the way to enter the [Parish] city and its custom without him getting suspicious.

And then a panicked catkin man rushed in.

"Elder--It's the imperial army from the fort."

"Umu."

My radar also shows the imperial army soldiers coming here.

"You heard him benefactor-dono. You should escape while we buy you time."

"There's no need of that. And also, I do not mind if you talk about us to the soldiers. Tell them that a man in black clothes followed by a black panther came, snatched your food and water, and then he ran away."

I raised my hand to signal Tama and Pochi, and then they went to the black panther and threw it, "eiya~" toward the village's entrance.

I canceled the binding magic when it was still in the air, then it landed like a cat and ran toward the soldiers.

It was not because of my [Coercion] skill, it must be scared of Tama and Pochi who were muttering, "Steak~?" and "Hamburg is better nodesu!" full of appetite.

Leaving the surprised voices of the villagers and the black panther that started attacking the soldiers behind, we teleported back into the ant nest where our companions were waiting.

The soldiers will probably get hurt, but looking at their levels, there should be no one dying.



"Satou! I've finally reached level 50!"

When we came back, Lady Karina jumped while shouting so.
She's smiling with her whole face, which is rare for her.

I was going to evade reflexively, but I receive her lightly and put her down.
There was plenty of distance between us, yet the wonderful soft sensation
still reached my chest.

Demonic breasts are frightening--.

"Congrats~"

"Congratulations, nanodesu!"

Once the chorus of the congratulations song from the girls ended, I talked
about the things at the village.

"Parish is it.... It's worrying."

"Then since we have some ample time, let's go investigate it."

Thus, I, Sera and a guard are going to the parish city for reconnaissance.
The guard was Liza, selected with the fair [Ladder Lottery] method.

However, I have to prune the monsters here a bit more before that.

15-2. Parish

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Satou's here. When we're talking about city, the stereotype would be concrete jungle, but recently I feel that there has been more greening in city center than the rural area. There are spots of gray and navy blue in half-baked rural areas.



"Tenion Holy Emblem huh, very well, go on in."

"May the blessing of God be upon you, gatekeeper-sama."

"Yes, blessing."

The unmotivated gray-clothed gatekeeper made some prayer gestures and allowed us to pass the city gate.

He's still one of the better gatekeepers, the other ones are playing with dices.

"They were quite insincere guards weren't they."

"You're right--Liza, you don't have to be that tense."

While answering Sera, I warned Liza who was looking around with coercive sharp glances.

The three of us are wearing disguises masks, so no one can see through the disguises unless they have original Yamato Stone or Arisa's level of appraisal skill.

There's only a few people in the city, everyone is wearing gray clothes and walking with hunched back.

There are some stores here and there but not many items on the shelves so the customers are also sparse. Judging from the transactions between

the shopkeepers and the customers, it seems this city also uses notes as payment.

Looking briefly at the map, there are seven huge temples worshipping the god pantheon except the Demon God and the Dragon God. When I checked them with Clairvoyance magic, they were all under construction.

"I wonder if those are altars?"

"That's right Liza. It seems the seven altars are carved with each holy emblem of the Gods."

I moved my line of sight at the seven altars that Sera and Liza mentioned. There's a small altar on every intersection like a Jizo statue. Instead of statues, there are holy stones carved with holy emblems on the altars.

The order of the altars seem to be fixed, it starts from God Heraruon whom I'm not too familiar with and ends with God Parion. According to the documents I read in the Duchy Capital's Parion Temple--.

God Heraruon the [Top Seat of the Pantheon].

God Garleon of [Strife and Victory].

God Urion of [Trial and Judgment].

God Karion of [Wisdom].

God Zaikuon of [Passion and Change].

God Tenion of [Solace and Love].

God Parion of [Infant and Righteousness].

--Such were written.

Though it's not that the gods declared themselves, "I am god of~", but it came about from records of the circumstances of things in the era each god governed.

Now then, leaving that aside, we heard some troubling voices coming from a small temple when we were in the middle of the way to the big temples in the city's center--.

"I beg of you, Priest-sama! Please give your mercy on the 『Healing Garden』!"

"Didn't I tell you before. We can only pray to the gods. We have no mean to heal epidemic."

Such conversations happen often in Shiga Kingdom, but looking at the map, it seems the situation is a bit different here.

The priests in this city are low leveled in contrast to their number.

Everyone is lower than level 10 except the the few in the central temple.

Thus they probably can't use the mid class holy magic [Remove Disease] and advanced class holy magic [Purification Virus].

"Satou-san."

"Please wait a moment."

I stop Sera who were suggesting to help them, and check the situation on the map once again.

It seems infectious disease has spread inside the city but the statesmen appear to know the importance of isolating the carriers, most of the patients beside very few minority are gathered in a plot of land.

After investigating the book about diseases in my storage, the disease name written on the map is a lethal one, but since the incubation period is short, it should be hard for it to become a pandemic.

"I've confirmed it. It's a kind of epidemic that can be healed by Sera-san's holy magic."

After telling that, I put [Astro Suit] magic on my companions to prevent infection.

"Well then, shall we go?"

"Yes, Satou-san!"

We went to the small temple with Sera in the lead.



"Priestess-sama has come!"

The [Healing Garden] that the man who was making the appeal earlier took us to seemed to be a sanitary building.

"Priestess-sama, please change to purification clothes in this changing room. We've prepared new clothing to prevent the epidemic, so please don't worry."

A staff member handed surgical robe-like clothes and new masks and guided us to the changing room.

When I nod at Sera and Liza who looked doubtful, the two head to the changing room with relived looks. Unlike me, the two must have not understood the concept of sanitary clothing.

The man earlier was waiting when I came out of the changing room, so I chatted with him until Sera and Liza are done.

It seems he's the director of this facility, he's previously worked in the hospital in the capital of the empire.

"I couldn't use magic so I worked as a nurse instead of doctor. If only this place had the medicines and equipment of the central hospitals, I wouldn't stand idly while the patients were dying...."

There's an organization under the direct control of the emperor called [Brains] in the empire's central, apparently medical institutions in the imperial capital have been rapidly progressing thanks to the knowledges

brought from that organization.

"What kind of equipment are they?"

"Umm--Huh? I'm sorry, I couldn't recall the term. It's hard as you get older isn't it."

He beats his head while smiling wryly.

"Coming from such a convenient capital, there was a time when I was depressed to be dispatched to an antiquated parish, but in the end I couldn't leave the suffering patients alone."

He couldn't abide the emperor's [Renunciation] policy, so he was sent to this [Parish].

"I was told to 『Abandon the irrational god and revere the emperor who has bestowed prosperity and well-being upon his subjects』.... But I couldn't abandon my faith to Tenion-sama."

Does the emperor want to become a god?

Or perhaps he wants to weaken the gods who flourish from [People's Faith]?

Either way, I think he's picking a fight with the gods.

This, paired with the scientific weapons and the rumored train, it's strange how the Divine Punishment hasn't befallen them yet.

I'm intrigued at just how does the Weasel Empire's emperor manage to evade gods' wrath.

I really want to hear it once I meet him in person with the weasel merchant's mediation.



"Over here, priestess-sama."

We enter the isolation ward as guided by the director.
Looks like they've put dual layer doors properly here.

There seem to be some ventilation and air cleaning magic used in the sickroom, the air isn't muddy.

The staff here are good, I sure want to head-hunt them to Shiga Kingdom.
Or maybe I can send some Echigoya personnels to train here.

"Let's heal the patients who can't move first. Please gather them as close as possible, since I'll be using ranged magic."

"Eeh, expanding the range of 『Remove Disease』 magic which consumes a lot of magic power is too reckless!"

A priest who belongs to the hospital ward expressed his surprise hearing Sera.

"Don't worry about it. Liza, help me carry the patients along with their beds."

"Understood. Master."

I can't rely on [Magic Hand] magic here, so I carry the beds together with Liza.

We haven't done physical labors in a while, but since I and Liza each have enough strength to carry the whole ward, it's easy.

"■■...."

And then, Sera begins her chant with a long wand.

The accessories for magic boost that Sera wears are glittering, bringing about sublime atmosphere on her.

The enormous magic power that she's gathering begin to sway people's clothes and hair.

I stand behind Sera, secretly fully opening the Spirit Light to make it easier for Sera to gather magic power.

".... ■■■■■■■■ Purification Virus."

The moment the chant is completed, pure warm light that overflow from Sera wrap the patients.

I pick forest magic [Stamina Charge] and water magic [Calorie Charge] from the Magic Column the moment Sera invoked her magic and invoke them to ease the patients.

"Aah, what a comfortable light."

"Feels like my body is filled with power."

"Our gratitude to Tenion-sama who has led priestess-sama to us."

The patients who have been healed are muttering incoherently while shedding tears.

At first we planned to cure the patients who weren't in immediate danger after this was done, but since it was troublesome, I secretly used water magic [Cure Disease] at the same time Sera healed the patients who were seriously ill.

Right now they probably think of it as Sera's, or rather, a [Miracle caused by Goddess Tenion's servant-sama.]



"Satou-san, I'm sorry for poking my nose into unnecessary things."

"No, don't worry about it. I would have gone myself if Sera-san didn't."

After the treatment, the patients almost made Sera into a saintess and the ward's priest almost became Sera's apprentice, but we were able to somehow escape from the [Healing Garden].

"Next, shall we see how to use the ration coupons?"

"It's the notes we got as thanks from earlier right."

Sera took the coupons and looked at it curiously.

We originally got a bundle of coupons for the ration as thanks, but since we wouldn't have no use of it, we only took three pieces.

I thought it was the normal currency at first, but apparently it can only be used inside the parish.

There are two kinds of ration coupons; food coupons and necessity coupons, you can exchange them with the goods at the distribution center which gets the items transported from outside the parish.

It seems there's also service coupon which you can exchange for luxury and medicines.

"Master--"

Liza unusually puts her face close to my ears and whispers.

"--It's a flock of flying magic beasts. Please look to the east."

I looked up as urged by Liza and saw around eight Rocs flying toward the city.

The city's alarm bell resounds.

"It's the imperial mail!"

"The rationed goods are coming!"

"It's our chance to get the service coupon, hurry up!"

The men pull the carts and trolleys left in an open space toward the city's gate.

Apparently, it's not an attack but an air transport.

"Let's go see it."

I called the two and went to see the situation.

"--T-that was a rough unloading wasn't it."

"Yes, I wonder if the goods inside aren't broken?"

Sera's and Liza's surprises aren't surprising.

The Roc birds dropped the baggage without even landing in an open space slightly farther away from the city's gate.

There are screw-shaped magic devices on the Roc birds' heads, similar to the one on the Black Panther's from yesterday.

"Carry them to the central warehouse!"

A female weaselkin who looks to be high-ranked appeared riding a horse from the gate and ordered the men pulling carts.

"Matriarch-sama! There are 40 food goods and two daily necessities. There's a list of goods in the daily necessity bundles."

"Give it to me--no luxury goods huh. Only the reported medicines and nutritional supplements.... So the Emperor wants us to die from epidemic disease."

Apparently, the news about Sera curing the epidemic hasn't reached her ears.

"There's a lot of cloths. They're not dyed as expected. We don't have any choice but to collaborate with the black market guys to get the dye used in the ritual."

"Can't be helped. I resent working with a bunch who don't even have a fragment of faith, but we can't disregard the color written in the holy book for the ritual magic."

I thought of getting in contact with the top people of the city with some dye as a present, but I decided not to for now since we were still gathering information.



"It seems the staple food here is boiled sweet potato and beans that are crushed and hardened into bamboo shaped. It smells bad but it doesn't taste awful enough to not be edible. The bundle beside it is a lump of dried meat made for long preservation. It's moderately hard."

I receive the food bundle from the distribution center while Liza is explaining.

The calorie is questionable and the smell of fermented plants assails my nose, it makes me hesitate to try it. It's salty on top of getting praised by Liza for being too hard, so normal people probably eat it by chipping the meat with a knife or dip it into water.

Judging from the surrounding people, it seems they get one bundle for a day.

Since we didn't dare to eat bad things, we re-wrapped the food, and then we went to the mentioned black market after seeing the big temples that were under construction.

Due to the shops and people gathering in the narrow back lane, the crowded black market looks like the one I saw in a movie about Pacific War.

The people walking at quick pace in the hustle bustle look contrasting with the languid people walking in the main street.

"They're open in daytime even though it's called black market."

"The black part doesn't mean dark at night but something that isn't formally recognized, you see."

I answer Sera who's watching the surrounding restlessly.

"There doesn't seem to be anything unusual. Master, please look over there."

There's a yakitori stall at the place Liza's eyes are glistening at.

"Fumu, we need to investigate it."

"Yes, then I shall scout ahead."

I told Liza to be careful in order for me to not laugh at Liza who was devoted to her appetite, she ran toward the stall with a smile.

Making use of Flickering Movement, Liza moves between the crowds while leaving afterimages.

...You don't have to be serious at a place like this okay?

"--10 ration coupons for one yakitori skewer? Isn't that too excessive?"

"Go somewhere else if you don't like it. That's the market price here."

The shopkeeper blew Liza's complaint.

Other customers who bought a yakitori skewer for 10 ration coupons were the proof that he wasn't ripping her off.

It's not like we have to buy it, but thanks to the smell of the burning fat of the bird meat, my mouth has turned into yakitori mode.

I'll negotiate with the shopkeeper in Liza's place.

"How much is it with normal money?"

"Money from central are just junk here."

I was going to pay with the weasel money I got at Silga Kingdom but he refused.

Then let's barter.

"How about this kitchen knife?"

It's an item that I acquired from a local noble from one of the various small kingdoms we visited.

It's just made from normal iron, but it's a relatively good knife.

"Hmph, how many yakitori do you want for this kind of high quality good?"

"Just give us 10. Kitchen knife should be used by a cook after all."

The shopkeeper timidly receives the knife.

I genuinely think that it's better for someone who can use it to have it rather than leaving it to become a fertilizer of my Storage.

I give the bundle of yakitori I got from the shopkeeper to Liza, and then have one for me and Sera each.

It seems to be of chicken skin and thigh sprinkled with salt.

The flavor from the charcoal fire tastes good. I'd like a bit more flavor from the thigh, but I won't ask for the impossible.

"Pal, you've just arrived at this parish right. Do you have any liquor?"

A man with stubbly beard talked to me when I was wiping the fat on my hand with a handkerchief.

"It can be distilled liquor or ale. I'll give you this gem for one bottle."

"Isn't that spinel? You can buy a barrel of high-quality liquor with that kind of gem you know?"

He rolled a beautiful red gem that can be mistaken with a ruby the 'Pigeon Blood' on his palm, and then he let the sunlight shine through it.

"That's if you're in Central right? We rarely get liquor here."

Is it prohibited by law?

Looking at the map, I see that liquor is really rare.

They're being made locally at the wayside villages, but there's barely any inside the city.

I take out a small bottle of distilled liquor from my cuff and press it on the man.

It's just something cheap sold at the Duchy Capital, but I think this goes well with the salty dried meat as a side dish.

"Ooh, haven't smelt this fragrance for a long time."

The man pushed the gem on me and disappeared into the back alley as if running.

I was intending to give it for free, but I guess it's fine. It's a bare gem after all, he probably didn't steal it from his wife's jewel box or something.

"D-do you have liquor? T-trade with this holy emblem."

"You sinner! Don't deal with that sinner. Trade with the gold coin I have."

"No, mine."

"You fools, step back--"

The magical power of liquor is amazing. The heavy drinkers in the black market gathered in an instant and it became an uproar.

"Oy, you guys! What is this uproar!"

Since some men riding horses who looked like the guards came, I teleported back to the Solitary Island Palacen with the two.

Looks like I can get quite a few collaborators here if I offer them liquor.



"Welcome~?"

"Welcome back, nanodesu!"

"Welcome back, how was the parish?"

While changing clothes, I went to the living room with the children who welcomed me.

After sipping the tea Lulu served, I spoke about the situation of the city.

"Hm~m, rationed food, what's more, supply from outside the city huh...."

"It sounds like an open prison."

"Rather than prison, it's more like a monastery for nobles who have committed a crime."

Hikaru gave her opinion to Arisa's mutter, and then Sera told her impression.

"Still, what does the Weasel Empire's Emperor intend to achieve by making such a troublesome place."

Lastly, it seems Princess Shistina has the same question as me.

I wrote a report about Weasel Empire's [Parish] with Kuro's handwriting, gave it to Echigoya Firm's Manager, and asked her to give it to the king.

"Master! The costumes for undercover operation are ready so I tell."

"Nn, spy."

When I returned to the Solitary Island Palace, Nana and Mia were waiting in sexy spy-like costumes.

Arisa must have implanted the wrong idea of spy into them.

Those flashy clothes are bad if we're investigating the territory outside the parish.

"I've prepared the costumes here for you. Change into them."

"Master, don't you think they don't have enough charm value, so is my humble opinion."

"Mwu, character costumes?"

The two people frown at the weasel costumes.

"It's alright Nana. You'll be popular with the children with this costume."

"That's! Wonderful, so I praise Master."

Hearing my words, Nana took the costume in high spirit, but Mia dragged hers to the changing room.

Now then, while waiting for Nana and Mia, I'll gather prior information using [Clairvoyance] on the map I got.

Using advanced space magic spell [Teleport], I moved to the eastern end of the sixth parish of the Weasel Empire.

15-3. An Ordinary Village

*

Satou's here. There was a time when the words [Assault Reconnaissance] became popular due to some anime or manga when I was a child. Going to an unknown nearby city with a train, and prowling the streets like a spy was also a good memory of mine. I mistook the meaning of the words cause I was a child though.



"Master, found a village ahead. Advising to scout ahead with an artificial spirit."

"Nn, shadow."

Nana and Mia who are wearing weasel costume are in unusually high tension.

Sorry, but there's no need to do that.

"It's alright. It seems they're all just your friendly villagers."

I pull the hands of Nana and Mia who look slightly disappointed to go toward the village.

Even if the villagers point their blades at us, they can't possibly damage these costumes anyway.

"Yoo, travelers."

"Heya, villager. We've come to sightsee the construction of the smoke car, is it close by?"

I talk to an old weaselkin man who's speaking slowly at the entrance of the village.

The reason why I choose this village is because, as I've said earlier, this place is the closest to the railroad construction site.

There are more ratkin and rabbitkin people than weaselkin in this village.

The surprising thing is the fact that there's no noble or slave not only in the parishes but also in the Weasel Empire territory.

However, it appears the citizens are divided into three classes. Whether the third class citizens are actually treated like slaves, we will see it ourselves as we tour the country.

I've infiltrated this area dressing as a typical liquor peddler to see the situation.

"That the sound you can heaaard? That one's over that hiiill."

"Thank you, villager. This is what I'm selling, have a cup."

"Aww, thank yaa."

I pour sake into a bisque cup and offer it to the kind old man.

"Kaah, this stuff's goood."

"That good?"

"Lemme taste too."

I sold the sake to the two other villagers not for free, but for blue copper coins that's generally used in the Weasel Empire.

While selling the sake, I gather information by pretending to chat with the elderly.

I let Nana and Mia to take care of the selling along the way.

"Sake seller, want to taste this?"

"Ah, thank you."

I take the dried meat the old man recommended while matching his tone.

It's a salted dried meat just like the one I saw in the [Parish].

"Did the village make this?"

"--Hm? Which village ya came from?"

"From beyond that mountain."

The elderly looked like they were in doubt when I replied.

Oops, it seems I said something wrong. I invoke the [Foolish Field] usually used for interrogation to befuddle them.

"Can't be helped theen."

"Ya can't buy cheap provisions from the military if there's no smoke car."

According to the elderly, it seems the stinky fermented calorie bar from back then will become tasty if you make it into a rice gruel and put some herbs to delete the scent.

"It be niice since the construction done and the smoke car came."

"Riight. The growing children can now eat their belly full cause we can sell the crops and buy the military provisions."

"Gracious Emperor ee."

Unlike in the parish, it seems the Emperor is well liked in these remote agricultural villages.

Further, it seems merchants who come riding the smoke car are buying their crops.

"What're you doing, what's with the liquor smell in the middle of the day even though the young ones are working away in the construction site of the smoke car road."

"Aah, village elder. Have a drink."

"Hou, sake huh.... How much?"

The village elder shouted, "Cheap!" when I told him the price, and then he

bought all the sake jugs I brought with me.

That's fine and all, but for some reason the villagers gather and it's become a feast.

I was a bit surprised to see them spending that much even though it wasn't the time for harvest.

The people enjoying the sake are wearing rural-like clothes with a lot of patches, but every one of them is smiling and looking healthy.

"This village sure is prosperous."

I returned to my usual tone but there wasn't already any villager who minded it.

"Yeah, since the current emperor took the reign, the tax changed from 7:3 to 4:6 you see. So even such a remote village like this can be relatively prosperous."

From the government taking 70% and villagers 30% to them taking 40% and villagers 60% huh?

I thought the tax would be high since this was a military nation that developed the high-cost low-return scientific weapons.... Apparently, that's not the case.

"Long live the Emperor!"

""Long live the Emperor!""

With one leading, the villagers held a cup in one hand and shout together, then they laughed 'Gahaha'.

Mia who was free after selling all the sake plopped down on my lap as I was sitting on the ground and then she abruptly played her lute.

It's a fun melody with "I hate drunkards" tones sometimes mixed in.

Next to Mia, there's Nana carrying some children who have come to pick up the dishes.

"Master, secured the young organisms so I report."

The children carried under Nana's arms don't look like they dislike it as they're absorbed in gnawing rice crackers.

"You've a beautiful wife and a cute daughter."

"Nn, happy marriage."

"I see, the daughter must be happy too."

Mia looks satisfied hearing the old weaselkin.

She must have thought that she is the wife, but unfortunately I think she's mistaken.

However, there's no need to point that out and displease Mia.

While patting Mia's head as the lute's tone changed to [Fun Feast], I mix in with the villagers' chat.

"So I've come here to sell my sake, but is it alright for you to take a break from the field work?"

"Yea it's fine. Emperor-sama has distributed pesticides you see."

"Thanks to that, we got rid of the troublesome pest."

Mumumu, pesticides huh... I'm a bit worried as to whether they get the dose right.

"We also got the mowing rabbits."

Mia who heard rabbit mentioned moved her line of sight at us.
She must be interested in it.

"What kind of rabbits are they?"

"It's a kind of rabbit that only eats weed without caring the crops."

One of the elderly points at the field.

It's a small rat-sized rabbit.

"If ya don't put them in the hut during the planting and budding seasons, they'll eat them all with the weed like what happened at Gozan's place ya see."

"I've failed as rep of the village."

I see, it has a habit of eating the plants that have just grown huh.

"Thanks to them, farmwork's easier now."

"During the free time, the young 'uns often went outside the village to make more fields."

"Ain't it fiine, something or otheer, the new fields will be theirs, young 'uns must pull themselves together."

Are they developing new private fields in long term?

Hearing that, Nana tilted her head and entered the conversation while still carrying the children.

"Monsters outside the village are dangerous so I warn."

"It's alright. The empire force comes and defeats monsters and bandits y'see."

"Not bandits, they're tigerkin liberation army right?"

"People who're brandishing weapons and steal food from villages are bandits enough."

I tried searching the map around here and just as the villagers said, there was no monster around here, even on the mountain foot, there were only weak monsters whose levels are in single digit.

"The knights come patrolling here once a month even now."

"They went sword hunting and took the village's swords and spears away, the peeps were maad, but--"

"We got farming tools instead."

"After getting something this good, we'll get punished if we complain ya see."

An old man carrying a sturdy looking farming tool made from iron is showing it off.

"They also made the well with clickety-click."

"Not clickety-click, it's water pump!"

"Oh ain't it fine. Yer' the only one who calls it water pump to look smart."

Apparently, they even have a hand water pump.

The government here seems to be doing quite good.

I might have come to respect the emperor unconditionally if I hadn't saw the parish.

"What'd you say!"

"Try saying that again!"

The two old weaselkins who have been quarrellings since earlier catch each other's collar and glare un-befitting of their ages.

"Good grief, weasels are easy to pick a fight."

"Don't say that, our blood boil fast since the time of ancestor-sama."

The old weaselkin that I met first covered for his race hearing an old rabbitkin's grumble.

As it looks like it's going to devolve into a fist fight, the village elder finally stands up, unable to remain indifferent.

"You fools! If ya want to fight, do it in front of His Majesty the Emperor!"

The village elder shouted while carrying a sake bottle in one hand.
He looks like he's ready to enter the fight.

I feel that there was a lot of intellectual and rational ones among the weaselkins I met outside the Weasel Empire, but looking at the villagers here, I end up thinking those people must have been an exception.

Still--Emperor?

No way there's a teleport gate in such a remote village, is it some kind of term?

My doubt quickly clears up.



"Here I go, Gozan!"

"Come, Banga!"

The old weaselkin men who have taken off their coats are exchanging blows with magnificent telephone punches.

As the two made a clean hit at each other, they staggered and fell backward.

Old Gozan stood up while wobbling, but old Banga seems to have gotten a cerebral concussion, he's not getting up.

"What's wrong, Banga!"

"Stand up, Banga!"

"His Majesty the Emperor is laughing at ya!"

"That's right that's right! Look sharp before the Emperor!"

The surrounding villagers are cheering, or rather, jeering at old Bangan. The 'Emperor' that they're referring to is a statue of weaselkin made from obsidian-like thing put in the center of the village's square.

Its left eye is a red stone, its right eyes is a blue stone, suspicious light coming from the statue gets stronger every time the villagers roar.

....It's a statue of evil god no matter how you look at it.

In fact, there's a magic square embedded in the square though the villagers don't seem to notice it, every time the villagers enthusiastically shout out, their magic power and stamina get drained.

We resisted the drain aimed at us, but the magic power leaking from our equipment couldn't seem to, thus quite a lot of magic power got absorbed into the emperor statue.

I don't know if that's the reason, but I feel that the statue has begun to emit red aura-like light.

"Wooooo!"

"Duryaaaaa!"

Old Banga was able to stand up somehow while shouting, old Gozan replied back with a shout too.

The telephone punch earlier was bad enough, but now the two are swinging their arms around to exchange baby punches.

It must be some kind of weaselkin sense of beauty that I do not understand.

The two's fists sunk onto each other's cheeks, and then they fainted, a double knock out.

Geez, it's not a fight between elderly.

"They've been fighting for idiotic reasons since they were kids."

"Unlike that time, now we have His Majesty the Emperor's statue, ain't it fine."

"Yer' right, that times one of the sides would die after several matches in a fight like this."

"Weasels can't hit the brake once they see blood, it's scary."

--Huh?

Perhaps the emperor statue is for the sake of the villagers so they won't die needlessly from a fight by exhausting their strength?

Nevertheless, preparing such expensive magic tools that can drain magic power in many villages should have cost them enormously.

The rational and selfish weaselkins I know can't be that generous out of only goodwill.

"Village elder, the emperor's statue is shining reed."

"Fumu, the impurity gathered fast this time. Usually it takes a year.... Well fine. Let the young ones going to the smoke car site tomorrow carry a letter to the city."

"Would be niice if the official-sama that bring the replacement statue is Moton-sama. That persoon would be willing to repair the bank with earth magic."

"Oy oy, ya shouldn't think of first-class citizen-sama as a substitute of oxes and horses."

Fumu, judging from their conversation, it seems that even though the first-class citizens are treated like their superiors, they don't seem to be a privileged class like noble.

We bid our farewell to the village elder and went toward the smoke car

construction site.



"Master, it's full of muscle men so I tell."

"Mwu, clank clank."

Mia quickly gave up from the noise in the construction site, Nana lost her interest since there were no children in the site, so the members changed. The backup are Arisa and Hikaru.

"The smoke car is a train alright."

"Yeah.... The smoke car road also looks like railway track complete with railroad ties."

It seems the smoke car's carrying power also plays a big role in laying the new rail track.

The construction site not only has beastkin and scalekin men, there's also manned normal golems and ones that look like bulldozers and excavators. The latter are not using internal combustion engines, they seem to be types of golem.

Looks like the science is not that all-encompassing.

"I've seen it earlier, I think the emperor statue is suspicious after all."

"Right right, it's not often there's an item that much suspicious."

Arisa, Hikaru and I are of the same opinion in this matter.

"Then, next we should follow where the emperor statue is getting transported to."

Speaking of chasing, it's ninja.

I should ask Tama to track the transport route of the emperor statue from the village earlier.

Now then, will an ogre or a snake come out of it....

<TLN: Idiom meaning you never know what will happen.>

Ideally, I'd love it if it was [The mountains have brought forth a mouse].

<TLN: Much ado about nothing.>

I think world peace is the best after all.

15-4. An Ordinary Town

*

Satou's here. I like train in itself, but I only have bad memories of commuter trains. Having yourself jam-packed in it everyday, it feels like it even wears my mind. Surely, were crowded trains ceased to exist, wouldn't office workers' stress level decrease to 30%?



"Revolution, nanodesu!"

"UGGYAAAAAAA"

Arisa is scrambling her purple hair while Pochi sharply points at her in front of her.

"This is the cicada sound huge harvest nanodesu!" <TLN: She said ミンミンの五穀豊穣 read "Mimmin no Gokokuhoujou".>

Pochi who's holding cards in one hand takes the shupin pose, but I don't know where to even begin to retort her mistakes.

Looks like Arisa is not good at playing Daifugou card game.

"That should be 『Social upheaval of the poors』 so I correct." <TLN: This is the correct term, 貧民の下克上 read "Hinmin no Gekokujou".>

"As expected of Nana nanodesu! Pochi was also going to say that--it's true nanodesuyo?"

Pochi commends on Nana's correction.

The last of her words had some hesitation in it so it must not be the truth.

"Satou, are you going already?"

"Yeah, it looks like there's some movement at the emperor statue, I'll be

going for a bit."

Hikaru who noticed me carrying a weasel costume on my arm called out. Apparently, Hikaru and the others are playing Concentration card game.

"Her Highness is really strong."

"Since this game is just about memorizing things, it's simple."

"Oh Tina you cleaned the house."

"Yes, I might be stronger in card games, but I cannot win against Her Highness in Concentration."

Hikaru is calling the princess using nickname. Zena-san is muttering alone, looks like she's trying to memorize the card positions.

Even Sera who's unparalleled in poker is weak in memorizing game like Concentration.

"Tama, take care okay."

"Works hard for Pochi's share too nodesu."

"Aye aye sir~?"

Once the beastkin girls finished their talk, I teleported to near the village from yesterday using Unit Arrangement, taking Tama along.



"Fumwu, so the letter was telling the truth.... Gathering impurity this fast, aren't there too many hot-blooded people in this village?"

A weaselkin wearing official-like clothing who's watching over the exchange of the emperor statue mutters with his hand on his chin.

The ones who are doing the actual work are a man and a woman wearing magician-like clothes using force magic.

"Hokku-sama, we've finished the fixture."

"The miasma rate of the emperor statue is normal for the period of its installation. It seems only the magic power that has been accumulated."

It's probably because of the magic power leaked from our magic tools. Those male and female magicians seem to be quite an analyst.

"Fumu, Maiazuma paper is blue, and the Mana paper is purple, the maximum huh.... It's just as you guys' analysis. However, we've already come out of our way here. Let's take this back."

"You're right. I'd hate to end this in vain, and the military bunch would call the researchers salary thieves if they don't get to work once in a while."

The magicians gave a tanzaku-sized litmus paper-like thing to the official. Apparently, that's a tool to measure magic power and miasma levels.

Putting the magic power aside, I'd like to know the way to measure miasma.

I'll look for some researchers they mentioned and see if any of them is selling the thing in the back channel.

It looks like an expendable after all, I think I can buy it normally from a merchant if that's being produced outside the research institute.



"Ticket for Magyuba is 30 swen for one, 20 swen for a child."

"Tickets for two please."

I purchase the smoke car tickets from the conductor of a temporary station.

Swen is the currency used in Weasel Empire, one blue copper coin is one swen.

Come to think of it, this might be the first country that has a name for its currency.

It might be translated to like '●● copper coins' by language skill because it's called the same.

I don't mind this since memorizing them would be a pain, but it does make the sense of exoticness decrease.

"Yes, thank you. If you're going from Magyuba city to your next destination, please buy the ticket from the ticket box or the conductor of the next train there."

The weaselkin conductor told me so while giving the tickets.
It seems to be a fairly placid system.

I thank the conductor and then go toward the smoke car with Tama.

"Second class citizens can only ride on the general car, so don't make a mistake and enter the noble car that's immediately behind the smoke car."

"Yea, understood."

Assenting the conductor's warning, we board the general car.

Looks like this one is of unreserved seats. Villagers from the nearby villages heading to Magyuba town to peddle things are carrying huge luggages on their backs.

"There~"

"Quietly."

"Aye."

The officials carrying the emperor statue had finally arrived, we got here first since we used teleport magic.

The whistle signaling departure echoed the moment they got on board, apparently it was waiting for them.

It might be more efficient to just track them, wait for them to arrive at Magyuba City and then teleport there afterward, but for the sake of later on, I confirmed whether the forged citizenship ID could be used to buy tickets here.

There was not even a simple ID check at this station, so I'm planning to confirm it once we arrive at Magyuba city.

"Gatan goton~, gatan goton~"

Children really are fascinated by the unique rhythm of a train and the flowing scenery on the window.

Tama is rooted on the window since awhile ago.

"We will be entering a tunnel soon. Everyone, please close your window."

The conductor showed himself from the window in car ahead and shouted.

The other passengers begin to close their windows.

Window?--Is it because the vibrating sound is noisy?

"You folks, it's tunnel soon, close yer' windows."

When I was racking my brain to think of the reason, the ratkin aunty who was sitting next to us bent her body and closed our window.

All the windows here are fitted with glass.

"Yer faces would become pitch black from the soot if you don't close the window in a tunnel."

"Is that so, thank you very much."

"It's alright, if one's open, everyone's face will become pitch black y'see."

The aunty's anger dissipated once she knew that I was a beginner of smoke car.

Apparently, everyone does the same at first.

"Mountain~? There's a hole on it~"

"That's called a tunnel."

Tama who's sticking her cheeks on the closed window says so while desperately looking at the front.

Don't put too much strength into it since the glass will break okay?

I secretly put force magic [Enchant Physical Protection] on the window.

"Pitch black~"

Looks like there's no illumination inside the tunnel.

The car in the front probably has headlights.

The wall of the tunnel isn't made of stone from earth magic's petrification, but from concrete-like thing.

"Did ya know? This tunnel is--"

According to the knowledgeable aunty, the tunnel itself was made by 100 earth magicians of the empire in one go.

Looks like they don't overemphasize the use of science, they do use magic when it's convenient, kind of hybrid.

To capitalize on the unexpected source of information, I offered some baked sweets made by Lulu to stimulate the aunty, thus I got to hear various things about the remote regions of the Weasel Empire.



"We will be arriving~ at Magyuba City Station~ We will be arriving at~ Magyuba City Station. We will be arriving at Platform 3 of Magyuba City Station. As Platform 2 is for train arriving from Gajuma City, please be careful not to mistake the platform."

The conductor who appeared from the car ahead informed the train arrival at the city with a peculiar tone.

After passing through two unmanned stations along the way, we arrived at the city after an hour.

Distribution of goods should be considerably quick with this.

"Town~?"

"It's in sight huh."

After passing through a forest, we could see Magyuba City surrounded by a tall white wall.

The smoke car sounds its steam whistle twice to announce its arrival to the city.

""KYUPOO""

Tama and the surrounding children imitated the sound of the steam whistle.

Due to the noisy sound of the smoke car, there doesn't seem to be any adult who's annoyed by the children.

The smoke car heads toward Magyuba City while slowly turning to the left.

Thanks to that, I can see the state of the city.

Looks like there's an exclusive gate for smoke cars.

"Gaate Oopen~?"

The metal lattice rolls up, and then the massive door inside it opens to the side.

There's a lot of beastkin children watching the smoke car from atop the gate even while getting their fur black.

The smoke car is advancing slowly in the city and then it enters a traditional station.

The station looks like a downscaled version of the old tokyo station, it's more magnificent than I thought.



"Crowd crowd~?"

"It's somewhat crowded isn't it."

We were met with crowds after getting through the ticket gate.
The crowds reminds me of the nostalgic rush hour.

We walk in the crowd while hearing voice of boys and girls selling their goods.

Among them is--.

"Newspaper~ This week's newspaper~"

--Someone selling newspapers.

I think 5 swen for a thin four page newspaper is a bit too expensive, but it doesn't seem like he's overcharging.

"....It really uses printing."

You're challenging them too much, Weasel Emperor.

Good grief, just how is all this not violating the God's taboo.

The content of the newspaper is mostly about the troop deployment at Makiwa Kingdom.

There's even an article of an interview with the special inspector Usan of Scientific Vehicle unit.

According to the articles, Makiwa Kingdom invaded Weasel Empire's remote region without warning, so this was a retribution war against Makiwa Kingdom that had done all kinds of atrocities.

These are fabricated news without a doubt.

Makiwa Kingdom has no national nor military power to cross through the monster dominion overflowed with many high level monsters.

It's impossible even for the four lords with the special elemental wands unless they resort to terrorism.

We have reduced the monsters in that dominion quite a bit, but we didn't completely wipe them out as there are those that act as deterrent on the circumference.

In one or two years, they should increase enough to stop military campaigns from happening.

Preparing for war should take time, and since they're aware that their army have been defeated by the dragon knights in one-sided battles, they will probably hesitate to march.

"Found it~"

Tama pulled my sleeve, I raise my face from the newspaper.

The officials came out of the station on a state car. The state car is a convertible type with thin wheels like the one you see in a film about the dawn of car.

Pursuing them by running would attract attention, so we went ahead of them by teleporting to their destination that I guessed, the government office at the center of the city.

I can just move to the right place if I got it wrong.

"Good view~"

"It is."

The center of this city is on a slightly elevated ground, so you can see the city well from here.

Searching the map for a bit, there are seven temples in the back street, and there are only priests who can't use holy magic in the temples.

There's no priest who can use holy magic in the territory, not even one. Of course, there's also no ordinary people with holy magic gift and skill. They were probably forcefully deported to the parishes.

Instead, there are several hospitals in the main street, they're packed with magicians who can use healing magic from earth magic, water magic and such.

Unlike in other places where orphanages are often found besides temples, there are only public orphanages here.

It seems that the emperor intends to make the citizens perceive that temples are unnecessary over time.

"Unifoorm~?"

Tama curiously moves her sight at a street while her ears are twitching.

There are children wearing school uniform-like uniforms roaming that street.

According to AR reading, it appears they're students of empire state childhood schools.

Looking at the map, this city has more school buildings than Shiga Kingdom's Capital.

Since the number is still too few compared to the population, it doesn't seem to be a compulsory education, but it feels like they're increasing the foundation little by little in order to support science and technology.

"Here come~"

Tama pulls my sleeve.

Looks like the car the officials ride on has arrived at the government building.

"Now then, let's go."

"Aye!"

Tama transforms into her pink ninja costume with a white smoke. Un, she looks like quite a ninja.

15-5. An Ordinary Town (2)

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Satou's here. When someone is insisting that they're extremely normal, it makes me doubt that they're hiding something abnormal. Even though I know that I'm only jumping at shadows, I still end up looking for it.



"Fatty mouse~?"

"Wonder what's that? It looks like a capybara."

In a room we found in the middle of the way as we chased the officials who went to the basement, we saw babies of capybara-like animals with plasters and people in white robes.

I think they're beastkin but since they're wearing big masks and visor-like sunglasses, I'm not really sure.

When I look closer, I see that there are red crystals which look similar to fragments of magic cores on the plasters.

The capybaras that have been plastered are sent to the next room through a slippery slope.

"Confiscateed?"

"Looks like it's a bit different."

I carry Tama under my arm and peek at the next room.

There's a bath tub filled with entrails and pieces of meat in the room, and the plastered capybara-like animals from earlier are greedily munching on them.

Are they some kind of lab animals?

Men wearing the same clothes as the men from the next room are sprinkling white powder using ladles on the entrails.

They're doing it roughly, yet the capybara-like animals are not minding it as they're busy with the entrails.

"Tch, ran out of powder."

"We're out of stock too, make more of them."

"What a bother."

A man carrying a ladle goes to one part of the room while cursing.

--That's?!

The pill the man took out from a bottle are shown as [Reborn Seeds] on the AR.

It's the same medicine which transformed the creatures in Shiga Kingdom's Royal Capital's sewer into red-rope monsters.

Perhaps, this is the secret factory which produces the red-rope monsters?

"Master, here too~?"

Tama who had slipped out of my binding before I knew it is beckoning me in front of a room next to this.

"Those peculiar vines, are they Hopping Potatoes?"

"Of cour~se."

Tama nods.

Those are monsters that are hunted by rookie explorers and baggage carriers in the Labyrinth City Selbira to raise money.

They're one of the pillars supporting the low earners' food bill in the

Labyrinth City.

Perhaps this place is....

Supporting my guess, the next room have [<<Walking Beans>>] and [Dancing Corns] being raised.

The true nature of the cheap military provisions I saw in the village--or rather, these must be the raw materials.

That means the capybara-like animals earlier are the origin of the dried meat huh....



"Welcome back, civil official Hokku."

"We've returned. Head Researcher-dono."

We almost forgot about our purpose, but we arrived at the place right on time using Ground Shrink.

The official from before gave the emperor statue and the litmus paper thing to a weaselkin wearing showy clothes in the innermost room.

There are also several other male and female researchers here.

"The miasma is less than ideal but the magic power is slightly over capacity is it...."

"With this we don't need additional supply of magic power from the city even if the Consul complains."

By city magic power, he must mean the magic power from the Source that can be gotten through the City Core.

"Didn't you say that the you were low on miasma before?"

"Not anymore, thanks to the rookie from Hokku-dono division."

"The one from the imperial university?"

The official frowns, not understanding the researchers' explanation.

"He seems to be upset for getting demoted from the imperial university to here, he's been spewing venom in many places."

"Entrusting that kind of guy to distribute food, I pity the slum people."

"The miasma collected in the emperor statue installed in the slum is three times the last month's amount."

The researchers told the reason while laughing unpleasantly.

When the official told them, "Correct the rookie's attitude", they laughed again.

"We originally take care of them by giving them food so they won't die of starvation in order to collect the miasma from their fatigue and envy anyway, isn't it fine."

"Tha-that's true but...."

They're probably using the miasma to produce the pill and raise the monsters.

Still, even if it's efficient, it's terrible for the slum people who have to endure getting abused unilaterally. I can't help but sympathize.

"It's not like there's a rebellion or rise in crime rate, so it should be fine as is."

"The production amount is increasing and the knights-sama who have come from the central in an official trip are also leveling up smoothly, all is good."

Don't tell me they're power leveling by defeating the monsters they're cultivating themselves?

I don't have the right to fault them since I'm doing the same thing in the labyrinth's underground, but unless this city is a special case, the whole Weasel Empire must be raising high level people systematically as such. No wonder that they're able to rear more than 100 level 50-class Temple Knights.



"Here we go, Knight-sama."

"Umu, I'll be trying my new sword."

A cage in the inner part of the room is opened, and then five Log Rats as big as wild boars jump out of it.

A weaselkin knight produces magic edge on the great sword he's holding, waiting in the center of the room.

Even though the magic power is leaking, the magic edge itself is stable, he's excellent for a level 30 knight.

However, it's clearly too excessive against level 7 rats, he cuts three rats in one swing of the great sword.

The remaining two rats were going to escape from the room, but the knight rushed at blinking speed and skewered them.

"Fumu, thanks to the magic edge device, there's not even a nick on the blade even after cutting the fat bones of the Log Rats."

Hohouo, so that great sword is a magic sword equipped with a device to generate magic edge huh.

I think there are more efficient magic circuits if you're going to put that magic device into it, but I'm not going to criticize someone else's plan.

"Then, should we take out the next rats?"

"Umu, let them come!"

We've seen enough, so I leave that place with Tama.

There should be nothing else to be seen here.



"Master, scream~?"

Tama muttered while pointing at a vent.

According to the map there's another floor below and the vent is connected to there.

--There's a prison below huh.

According to the map, there are numerous isolation cells with people with serious crime inside, there are also a lot of people with mental disorder and zero HP and stamina.

I have a bad feeling about this somehow.

I'd like to return without seeing it if possible, but I'd hate it if I felt hazy once I did that.

"Private Tama, go back to the surface first and secure the route."

"Aye!"

Tama followed my order with a shupin pose, and so I went to the cellar alone.



"Help me help me help me help me help me--"

"Don't eat me, no don't! Stop it stop stop it--"

Among the scratching and grinding sounds, screams and shouts like they're from madmen are reverberating in the cellar.

It seems this dungeon has been sound proofed with magic.

--Rather than prison, I guess this is more like a torture chamber?

I go to the room in the back where some people who seem to be the guards are.

A man suspended in the air hanging from the ceiling and two jailers are there, there's a transparent wall between the two parties.

There's the usual emperor statue put inside the room where the man is.

--St-stop it already."

"Of course I won't rite'? Did you stop when the 29 women you killed asked you to stop? You didn't rite'?"

The jailer who cut off the criminal's appeal lowers a lever on the wall.

The man who's suspended in the air hanging from the ceiling gets lowered and then the capybara-like animals below start munching on his feet.

Screams are echoing in the dungeon, the other criminals locked in their isolation cells begin to voice their resentments.

Apparently, they're using this place to carry out punishments and collect miasma.

"Geez, this is disgusting."

"Don't say that, the emperor decreed to instill 『Don't want to go into prison ever again』 and 『Not worth the crimes』 into the prisoners rite'?"

"Even if it's a national law, disgusting thing is disgusting."

I totally agree.

"Wish my transfer request gets accepted quickly."

"Thatsso? Executing justice on the bad guys, this is the best workplace for me though~"

Unlike the man who looks like he's going to get sick from the stress, the jailer who's been rhythmically operating the lever looks cheerful without a hint of stress.

It feels like I'll get mentally ill if I remain here any longer, so I teleport back to the top of the spire where Tama is waiting.



"The way they're doing things is similar to Master if we exclude the science and humanity parts isn't it."

Once we got back to the solitary island palace, I told everyone the things we saw in the Weasel Empire's city, and then Arisa said that.

"Arisa, what do you think you're doing likening the weasels to Master! We're talking about weasels here, they must be plotting something."

Liza who hates weasels openly shows her discontent.

"However, their rationality is very like the weasels. You'd normally hesitate to do many things even if you knew they were efficient."

Hikaru seemed like she agreed with several things about the weasels even

though she sounded disgusted with them.

As a former king, perhaps she thinks that the way they're preventing the people from starvation is acceptable.

"Creating monsters by their own hands.... Such an immoral act as if they've sided with the Demon God."

"Maybe there's a demon lord lurking in the shadow of Weasel Empire?"

Sera and Zena find the fact that they're creating monsters deplorable.

"Satou, perhaps that emperor statue can be used to control monster outbreak if we put it in a monster dominion?"

"Master, I support the princess's suggestion, so I inform."

"Nn, possible."

Nana and Mia agreed with the princess.

It's certainly possible.

The problems are the way to replace the emperor statue and to purify the accumulated miasma.

I'll investigate the manufacturing process of the emperor statue when I visit the imperial capital.

Also, Tama and Pochi who had been quiet were embarking in the journey to the dreamland with Lady Karina in the sunny living room.



"Amazing desuwa!"

"Fast nodesu! Truly really torebiaan nanodesu."

"Of cour~se?"

Behind Lady Karina and Pochi who are sticking their faces on the Smoke Car's window, Tama is nodding while looking slightly triumphant.

The next day after the meeting, we're enjoying the train trip from Magyuba City to Mogeiba City.

Hikaru and the princess are staying in the solitary island palace to accompany Sera who has expressed her non-participation since she was feeling hurt from to the persecution of the temples and the matter with monster creation.

Zena-san was also going to stay but Pochi and Tama pulled her hands, and she ended up coming.

I'm planning to enjoy things later with the three who stayed.

Further, since Liza didn't like the weasel costume, everyone is wearing ratkin character costumes.

""Ensha~, ensha~""?"

""Kyupopo, kyupopo, kyupopo"", nanodesu!"

""Ensha, ensha, fast~""

Matching the [March of Smoke Car] music which Mia made impromptu, the youth troupe and the children riding on the Smoke Car are singing in a chorus happily.

It seems the children like it since the song only has simple lyric that's easy to remember and match with the rhythm along with the repeating simple melody.

They'd be told off, "Shut up" if this were in Japan, but since there are minstrels going around asking money in every train here, there's no problem.

"Station~?"

"It's a small station nanodesu."

The Smoke Car lowers its speed and then stops at a small station in a village along the way.

"Something smells good."

"It smells like a stew perhaps?"

"Vendor."

Lulu reacted to Liza's remark, Mia pointed at the vendors rushing from the crowd.

Looks like they're selling boxed lunch.

"It's tasty and cheap, a set of provisional soup and stick roll, only for five swe~n."

"How 'bout a bento of boar meat and roasted pork? Only for 20 swen!"

"Would you like fatty bear stew~ It's 30 swen!"

They're quite expensive if we consider the ticket's price, but it seems the people riding on the Smoke Car are relatively well off, they're selling like hot cakes.

The stick roll in the provisional bento is a dish similar to the stick roll I ate in Kansai.

It's a dish where thin okonomiyaki made from corn instead of wheat is wrapped on a stick.

"Liza, purchase slightly more than for our shares."

"Understood. Tama, Pochi, let's go."

"Knowledge~?"

"Understood nanodesu."

Liza who consented with a sharp face goes to the bento sellers followed by Tama and Pochi.

The bento sellers who lose to Liza's intensity look slightly timid.

"Boar meat~?"

"Hard to leave the fatty bear meat behind too nodesu."

"You two, there's no time to be indecisive. Just like the stations we came across before, we should be only stopping for a short while here."

"Oh no~"

"Hurry nodesu!"

Looks like the beastkin girls have quickly gotten used to the Smoke Car trip.



We enjoyed the Smoke Car trip as such and arrived at Mogeiba City. Further, since the lunch boxes besides the cheap provisional bento were all delicious, I'm thinking of recreating them with Lulu once we get back to the solitary island palace.

"It's strangely crowded isn't it."

"Master, it's like the marketplace in the Duchy Capital downtown."

Arisa and Lulu are surprised with the crowd in the station building. It's understandable. The crowd is at least three times bigger than the one in Magyuba City when we departed.

"It's somehow like Haneda and Kansai airports before a superstar arrive isn't it."

Arisa expressed her impression.

Shouldn't it be Narita for international airlines?

The part where the crowd paid attention to the noble car and showed

disappointment as they checked the last person who got off is also similar.

"It's not this Smoke Car huh...."

"Like I said. The one Temple Knight-sama is riding on should be coming from the direction of the Imperial Capital Tegaeba."

Judging from the conversation I heard from the crowd, it appears some Temple Knights will be coming from the Imperial Capital.

"They exterminated a Hydra when they came before, I wonder what are they hunting this time?"

"There's no news about strong monster recently, maybe the mayor invited them to make a triumphal return to their homeland?"

For the time being, all is good as long as they're not coming to fight us.

"Satou-san, looks like we should get off soon."

"Thank you, Zena-san."

Since they've announced the permission to disembark, we also get down along with the other passengers.

"Here it comes! It's the Smoke Car from Tegaeba city!"

The crowd who heard the whistle sound shook off the station attendants and rushed to the platform.

Since it's dangerous, we wait a bit until the panic settles down a bit.

After a while, a Smoke Car joined with a luxurious noble car arrived at the next platform.

""WELCOME BACK! STAR OF MOGEIBA!""

""LONG LIVE LIEDILL-SAMA""

The crowd are cheering while waving.

They somehow look similar to the people from the first half of Showa era.

"Thank you for welcoming us!"

A weaselkin knight carrying a great sword shouted so at the crowd and stepped aside.

"I am not really fond of such a welcome...."

"Liedill-sama, please understand that this is also a job for the Temple Knights."

I heard such conversations with Attentive Ears skill.

The one who appeared was not a weaselkin.

It's a young longear (Booch) kin woman with emerald eyes and straight blond hair befitting of the expression "white peach".

She's a level 57 knight, and possesses Flickering Movement, Dual Wielding and similar skills, she also has Wind Magic skill.

"....She's like someone's imitation huh."

Arisa muttered alone. Just like me, it seems she reminds Arisa of a heroine of a famous fantasy work where the setting is on a cursed island.

It's probably due to the long ears peculiar to the longear (Booch)kin she has and her straight blond hair.

The guards who entered the station creates a passage in the crowd, and then Lady Liedill walks in it with a sharp face while leading the weasel knights escort and echoing the clink-clank sounds of her armor.

"She might be more suited to fantasy than the forest girl."

I drop a fist on Arisa who naturally dissed the female knight and wait the

line to pass with the girls.

Just as she passed on the passage in front of us, her equipment showed up on my AR reading.

As I was reading it, my eyes met Lady Liedill's.

"Li-Liedill-sama."

Lady Liedill walks toward here with her line of sight fixed at here. She's not minding her escort knights' bewilderment.

"--You, you're not an ordinary person right?"

Contrary to her cool voice, Lady Liedill's eyes are lit with dangerous light.

15-6. Temple Knights

*

Satou's here. Going out of fashion is a cruel thing in the society. The end-of-century type of story that took the world by storm in my school era has become a thing of the past now. I guess the only one that I still see today is the story about a supreme ruler in the post war end-of-century world?



"--Are you pretending to not hear me?"

The longearkin (Booch) temple knight whom we meet at the end of our Smoke Car trip, Lady Liedill is glaring here with challenging eyes.

"Then, I'll say it again--You, you're not an ordinary person right?"

While watching her face from the side, I look at the people around.

The level 30 knights who are following her are prepared to cover her anytime even while looking perplexed, the other guards and followers are dumbfounded by the sudden turn of event.

"A-are you talking to me?"

"Feigning ignorance is futile. You cannot elude my Dragon Eyes even if you slip into the crowd."

Lady Liedill points her finger at the bewildered Lady Karina triumphantly. An inexplicable atmosphere drift from the other girls besides Lady Karina. There's no one who can break this atmosphere since Arisa and Mia have quickly blocked Tama's and Pochi's mouths.

"Looks like you're wearing some excellent recognition inhibition items that prevent appraisal. However, that's useless. My Dragon Eyes can precisely capture the sign of strong people."

To explain her own skill like that, what a kind girl.

I don't know on what basis that Dragon Eyes thingy judges someone as strong.

If we're only talking about outward appearance, Liza has been looking strong ever since we came out of Seryuu City's labyrinth, while the youth troupe, beginning with Tama and Pochi, don't look strong at all since the start.

Moreover, besides Pochi and Arisa who are equipped with [Thief God Harness], everyone is wearing the highest class of recognition inhibition magic tools, so Lady Karina and the other girls' situation are about the same.

All the members who are present here have acquired [Magic Power Operation], except Lady Karina, so perhaps Lady Liedill sensed it from the magic power leaking from her body?

Further, I think the reason why Lady Karina hasn't been able to learn [Magic Power Operation] is because Raka is just too convenient.

It's only been several seconds, but it's about time for me to save her.

"Shouldn't Temple Knight-sama know the true identity of this person already?"

With the help of Deception skill, I tried to befuddle Lady Liedill.

"True identity?!"

"Liedill-sama--"

Lady Liedill only frowned in puzzlement, but it seemed one of the escort knights hit an answer as he run up to her and whispered on her ear.

--The crown prince faction?!"

Looks like they've interpreted my suggestive words as [crown Prince Faction].

They call him "crown Prince" even though he's the emperor's younger brother? Or so I thought, but the weasel merchant also referred to him as "His Majesty" instead of "His Highness".

Judging from the atmosphere, it seems there's a huge gulf between the emperor and the crown prince.

"What are the the crown prince faction doing in such a remote region?! Don't tell me the 『Bud of Calamity』 is--"

Hey hey, don't murmur all these dangerous words.

I've already had more than enough fill of such buds of calamity!

"Agaiiin."

"Mwu"

Look now, you even made Arisa and Mia exchanged tired looks.... They're of rat and rabbit costumes' faces though.

"Well now, I don't know what is this crown prince faction you're talking about. We were just having a fun journey using the smoke car. Being fussed over by the important people of the empire like this is troubling."

After I said that, Lady Liedill scowls at me with a face that looks like it's saying "Gununu."

"Fine then--"

Lady Liedill catches the nape of my neck and continues speaking with her face close enough for us to kiss.

Since it's across the ratkin costume, the impregnable fortress pair, Arisa and Mia are lenient about it.

"--We cannot clash against the crown prince faction in front of the populace. However, the next time you show yourselves before us, I'll make you bathe in blood with this Blue Rose and Red Lily bestowed by His Majesty Emperor."

"Yes, we will bear it in mind."

I boldly smiled at Lady Liedill who threatened me in whisper.
After a bit, Lady Liedill thrusts me away.

Receiving Lady Liedill's anger, the stone floor of the station building is stamped by her soleprints.

Looks like it'll become a new tourist attraction--while thinking like that, we teleport away after slipping into the crowd.



"Satou-san, are we going to continue the tour?"

"Yes, it'll be fine if we just change our attires."

The [Bud of Calamity] uttered by Lady Liedill intrigued me, but I don't want to end this long-awaited vacation like this.

Further, later I'm planning to give a one-to-one special lecture to Lady Karina, the impetus of that accident.

"Gao~?"

"It's tiger nanodesu!"

Tama and Pochi who have changed into tiger costumes that look like it'll be popular in Osaka are taking poses with their hands up in the air.

After the two were done, Zena-san went to change.

Since Mia is also wearing the tiger costume, this time I'm the only one who's different with a gray-colored ratkin costume.

"Stripes stripes."

It looks like Mia who likes stripped pattern likes the costume next to the rabbit one.

They say that white and green stripes are good, but since there's no tiger with such stripes even in another world, I gave up.



"This is the land of dream desuwa!"

"It's a really wonderful place isn't it."

Lady Karina and Lulu talk dreamily.

We're currently going around the attractions in the amusement park of Mogeiba City.

The line in every attraction was great but since the park has a fast pass function similar to the land of a certain mouse, we've been going around, enjoying them at shortened time with the power of money.

As a note, I had sold some diamonds and jewels for the needed money (swen).

Of course they're natural products from the labyrinth.

"One more~?"

"Master, Free Fall next would be good, so I propose."

"You two should go by yourselves next."

I bluntly declined the appeal of Tama and Nana who had become addicted to shriek-inducing attractions, but--.

"We can't~?"

"Master, can't we got together, so I ask."

I can't possibly leave the two who implored while looking like abandoned cats.

"Then, this will be the last time okay?"

"Aye!"

"Let's go quickly, so I urge Master."

With my hands pulled by Tama and Nana, we went toward the Free Fall queue.

"Pochi and the others aren't going?"

"Pochi is already satisfied nanodesu."

"M-me too, I've had enough of scary things desuwa."

I was trying to increase my companion but, not just Pochi and Lady Karina, it seems everyone has had enough of shriek-inducing attractions.

--Afterward, I was finally released after accompanying them for seven more times.

"Satou-san, we found something interesting!"

"Master, it's called house of mirrors."

Zena-san and Lulu who were resting at the bench came inviting me. The two hold my arms with unusual assertiveness and pull me to the house of mirrors.

I somehow feels like a suspect taken by police.

"Please look, tiger-san is everywhere no matter where you look at."

Lulu said to me happily.

If I had to say, I'd rather see Lulu's true appearance multiplied infinitely in the house of mirrors.

"Satou-san, please look up! The top is reflecting too."

I look up per Zena-san's words, our whole bodies are reflected on the top from sideways too, I don't know how it works.

I don't think it's good to have the image of underwear shown in public like this, though I don't really care since we're in animal costumes.

Arisa and Mia were waiting outside the house of mirrors.

"Master, let's go to the haunted house."

"Nn, horror."

I went into the haunted house with the impregnable pair whose ulterior motives were in plain sight, but it wasn't that scary.

If anything, I feel that there were a lot of jack-in-the-box type of surprises.

"U~n, cultural difference sure is cruel."

"Complicated."

An attraction that requires an explanation for 'where is the scary part' is

not good.

Just Arisa's said, it's probably due to the cultural difference.

"Karina, let's spin and spin around more nodesuyo!"

"Yes, I won't lose!"

I rode on a questionable playground equipment that looked like both coffee cups and spinning attractions with Pochi and Lady Karina, and then I'm riding a swan boat that goes around a pond with Liza in the end.

"This is quite difficult."

"There's no vehicle that operates by pedals in Shiga Kingdom after all."

Liza pushes the pedal with serious expression on her face.

And then, the water wheel behind the swan's wings begins to rotate and the boat advances forward.

"Liza, stop pedaling. The wind feels nice."

"Yes, it's very refreshing."

Letting the boat advances by itself, I stretch myself on the boat's seat.

Urged by me, Liza also relaxedly let her body rest on the boat's seat.

"Even though we've played with boats in the solitary island palace, some things feel different with a boat in a pond don't you think."

"Yes, Master. It somehow feels very relaxing."

I think that's because I'm with the calm Liza.



That healing time with Liza didn't continue for long.

--Nooooo"

Attentive Ears skill picked up mosquito-like small scream.

"Liza, I'm sorry but please take care of the boat."

After telling that, I moved to where the scream was with short-range teleport without waiting for Liza's answer.

"It should be around here."

It seems the opposite side of the amusement park is a slum.

People wearing poor clothes are sitting on the sides of the dirty road, muttering something with vacant eyes.
Simply looking at them is suffering.

"Don't come hereeeeeee!"

--That way!

I move to where the voice is with Ground Shrink.
It should be nearby.

Light footsteps of a child--above huh!

A girl is falling down from an apartment-like building just when I look up.
If this were a Soft Inc. anime, this would have been the scene to start a two-hour movie.

I extend [Magic Hand] to catch the girl.
Her bones would be broken if I caught her normally.

She's around 7-8 year old. Roughly first or second year of primary school.
She has bunny ears and a round tail.

She's probably a bunnyear-kin unless she's wearing a bunny ears accessory.

"Cross Sword!"

I could hear a cool shout from the top of the apartment.
I might have been charmed by the voice if it wasn't the Command Word for a technique.

I block the down-pouring red light slashes with [<<Flexible Shield>>] I picked from the Magic Column.
It's considerably weaker compared to Liza's Magic Edge Cannon.

The two slashes seemed to be a rapid-fire type of technique.

The after waves cut the apartments on the left and right, the slum populace scream.
Fortunately, there doesn't seem to be any casualty.

"Killing Steel Brandish!"

The shadow who was jumping from the rooftop let out two light blades which tore the road.
A radial crack runs on the ground, the broken asphalt are flying in the air.

Two swords are clad with red light on the other side of the dust cloud.

The assailant jumped along with the scattered asphalt pieces.
Judging from the speed, it must be Flickering Movement skill.

It seems the assailant is wearing a dark brown overcoat with recognition

inhibition function, although it's meaningless to me.

"Grass Star Tearing Slash!"

The two swords emitting red light assault us from both sides.

I repel the assailant's dual swords with the magic armor I produced on my right arm.

I can't use my left arm since it's holding the child.

Red sparks are scattered every time the magic armor touches the swords.

I haven't taken off the rat costume.

It's hard to fight unless I go for the win.

I produced magic edge on the costume's claw to try destroying the assailant's swords.

The assailant who sensed that took a distance away from me.

Quite perceptive.

The dark brown overcoat the other party was wearing fell down when they jumped.

"Eluding all three of my secret arts--"

The one standing on the other side of the dust cloud is the Temple Knight we met this afternoon, Lady Liedill.

"You, even though the color is different, you were the ratkin who was beside the female ratkin this afternoon weren't you."

--Her breath is rough.

Looks like she's talking to buy the time needed to readjust her breath.

"As I thought, the crown prince faction has set their sight on the 『Bud of Calamity』 too."

I feel sorry for Lady Liedill who looks triumphant, but I came to save her because I heard a girl's scream by accident, I didn't have any intention to meddle in that kind of troublesome things.

"What are you going to do to this girl?"

"Of course, I'm going to sever her life right here and now."

The girl is surprised and shakes in my arm.

According to AR reading, her level is only 2. And she has three gifts, [Crisis Perception], [Oracle] and [Short-range Teleport]. She has no title.

Summing up all the information I got in Weasel Empire so far, I think the [Oracle] skill is the main cause of someone getting called [Bud of Calamity].

"Killing a young subject with my own hands is painful, but this too is for the sake of the empire's peace. It's necessary to cut off the future anxiety here."

"What can this child possibly do."

I've got the rough idea already, but I'd like to hear something more concrete from this seemingly loose-tongued girl.

"The very existence of that girl is a crime. Lament at the filthy peepers for the misfortune of having the skill carved onto you."

My guess that the skill to channel god, [Oracle], being the problem seems to be right after all.

In a world where gods exist, is it alright for her to call them [Filthy

Peepers], I'm slightly worried while thinking that it's none of my business.

For now I understand that this girl is in danger as long as she has the [Oracle] skill.

Lady Liedill fixes her posture, readying her dual swords.
Her appearance makes me want to take a picture of her.

--Karina, Kiiiiiiiick!"

A blue meteor coming down from an apartment rooftop created a crater in front of Lady Liedill.

"You, from that time--Tigerkin?! What does this mean."

Blue luminous points reflected on my Radar are lined up on top of an apartment.

Apparently, everyone besides Lady Karina has gathered.

Everyone is shining blue light and with [Coercion] skill in full throttle.

"I-impossible.... Such masters in such a countryside.... So the crown prince is really making use of the hero in Dejima Labyrinth to mass produce strong warriors!"

--Mumu.

I'm bothered by "Making use of the hero."

Rather than asking her the details, meeting the hero directly in Dejima Island seems faster.

From our correspondence last time, it looks like he doesn't want Nanashi to visit them, so I probably should go as Satou.

Leaving that aside, I have to close the curtain here soon--.

"Withdraw from here."

I urge Lady Liedill who's shaking in fear to escape.

"A Te-Temple Knight does not retreat."

"Then, it can't be helped."

I take out a magic sword clad with evil aura from my Storage and execute [Coercion] skill in full throttle.

Next, I turn on the [Grim Look] preset of the animal costume, transforming into something that will appear in your nightmare if you see it once while you're in [Fear] state.

Lady Liedill screamed briefly, drew back several steps, tangled her legs and fell on her back.

Scary thing is scary even if you're level 57.

Since the attack is worse than Wraith's and Lich's fear assaults, I guess it can't be helped.

>[Bloodthirst Projection] Skill Acquired.

>Title [One who is Feared] Acquired.

>Title [The Great King of Dread] Acquired.

For some reason, I got some strange skill and titles.

The Nostradamus great prophecy-like title slightly bothers me, but since it's not like anyone will see it anyway, it's all good.

"Kuh, so this is it...."

Arisa who heard Lady Liedill's muttering of resignation shouted, "If you're saying, 『Kuh』, the next line should've been 『Kill me!』, don't you

understand!", but let's just ignore her.

"Well then, farewell. I'll take responsibility of this girl and take her out of the empire."

After telling that to Lady Liedill who was crying bitter tears, I moved to a safe house at a rural town in Oyugock Dukedom using Unit Arrangement. Of course, I went with all of my companions, not just with the girl.



"U-um.... are you going to kill me?"

That was the girl's first utterance once she had calmed down after I gave her a hot milk.

Since I've healed her bruises and traces of abuse, and let her take a bath, she looks refreshed compared to when she was in Mogeiba slum.

"I will not. I will give you three options."

"Oftion?"

Oops, I forgot that she's a child who doesn't understand difficult words.

"Choose one among three, I mean."

"Un."

Once I corrected myself to make it easier to understand, it seemed the girl comprehended too.

"First, live in a temple as an oracle miko in Shiga Kingdom."

"Miko?"

"They're the people who are tasked to convey the words of gods to the

populace, like this person here."

I explained while showing the vision of the former head miko of Tenion Temple, currently a maid apprentice, Lily to her.

"Prettyy."

The girl stares at Lily's image with glittering eyes.

"The second choice, concede the power of oracle to someone else and go back to your hometown."

It's normally impossible, but if we use the Unique Skill of demon lord Shizuka, it's possible to transfer this girl's [Oracle] skill to someone else.

"Consid?"

"I mean, giving up the oracle power."

"Un?"

The girl tilts her head in puzzlement with complicated look.

She doesn't seem to understand well.

"The third choice, live in an orphanage in Shiga Kingdom, and once you've grown big enough, you either discard the oracle power and go back to your home town, or live as an oracle miko."

"I don't really understand."

It's hard to explain things to a child.

"Geez, this is hard to watch. Leave this to Arisa-chan."

Arisa who appeared proudly with an jerked chin sits on my lap.

I tried to put her down since there was plenty of space left on the sofa, but

she resisted more intensely than I thought.

"You shouldn't fight okay?"

"It's not a fight. It's just a kind of endearment."

Arisa replied back to the girl with a triumphant smile.

"Now then, continuing from before. Going back home or having lots of meals, which one you want?"

"Meals!"

The girl answered without any hesitation.

On the corner of my vision, I saw the beastkin girls nodded with serious expressions on their faces.

"You can play with other children but you can only eat a little, or you can eat a lot of meals but you have to work, which one you want?"

"Meals, a lot!"

It's an immediate answer too this time.

"You heard that. It seems this child wants to become an apprentice at Lily's place in Duchy Capital."

I felt awkward since it somehow felt like we deceived an innocent child, but we ended up entrusting the girl to Tenion Temple in the Duchy Capital.

Of course, they wholeheartedly welcomed an addition to the valuable [Oracle Miko].

Just in case, Household of Duke Mitsukuni will be her guardian.

She's wearing the translation ring from the elf village, so she can talk in Shiga Language without problem.

She's probably going to learn Shiga Language naturally during the course of her training.



"I-it's about time to rest desuwa."

"You can't, Karina-sama. There's still five magic power potion left."

When I indifferently told the complaining Lady Karina about the remaining potion, her expression became miserable and then she shifts her imploring glance at Raka that's emitting light on my forehead.

『Do your best, Karina-dono.』

Raka encouraged her with a subdued voice.

"E-even Raka-san...."

"Now, Karina-sama. I'll add more magic power potion if you don't continue."

"....S-so cruel desuwa~"

We restart the magic power operation training while Lady Karina looks like she's about to cry.

It's just a simple training where she has to cut an adamantite pillar with a magic wooden sword filled with magic power.

Tama and Pochi who peeked from behind a nearby tree like a totem pole are secretly cheering for Lady Karina.

Looking closer, it seems the other girls are also watching over the special training.

Further, she had drank 27 more magic power potions by the time she

learned magic power operation.

15-7. Dejima Island

*

Satou's here. When I hear the words 'sailing ship', it reminds me of a great game where the actual sea chart change depending on whether you believe on the report or not. In order to prove which one was more interesting, I played the game all night with a friend who also remembered the game of the age of exploration.



"Ship~?"

"Master, there's a ship in the distance nodesu."

Hearing the report from Tama and Pochi through the speaking tube, the Brownie who's steering the ship lowers the control lever of the Aerodynamic Engine.

With that, the sailing altitude of the ship got lowered and the ship landed on the water with a slight impact.

"It's been awhile isn't it~ Going with this ship."

"You're right."

This is an unfortunate ship that hadn't got its turn after the journey from Boruenan Forest to Shiga Kingdom's Trade City.

Since it's installed with an Aerodynamic Engine even though it's of low altitude model, I couldn't lend it to other people.

"I wonder if Hayato and the others are fine?"

"Oh they're fine."

I answered Arisa who seemed worried after glancing at the hero's status

shown on the marker column of the map. There's no status abnormality nor extreme physical drop.

We're heading toward Dejima Island in order to meet the hero. I was slightly worried about him after hearing from Lady Liedill the Temple Knight in Mogeiba City that he might be being used by the crown prince's plot.

We're riding on a sailing ship instead of an airship since this is not an official work of the Tourism Ministry.

We were forbidden from going to the Weasel Empire, but using, "To ensure the safety of the princess and the airship" as a pretext, I got the permission to have a vacation and do a "Hero's Symphaty Call" personally. The wonderful thing is that Tourism Ministry personnels are still paid monthly on vacations. The fantasy world, or rather, the noble community is quite flexible.

Further, the entourage members of the Tourism Ministry are currently socializing at Pendragon Mansion at the Royal Capital in my place. Their main purpose is to popularize shared information that are not confidential and unusual things and dishes we got in our visits in the various small kingdoms.

Since we can easily meet them if we go to the solitary island palace, it doesn't really feel like we're apart.

Zena-san stays behind to guard the princess and Sera, but Lady Karina is going with us for the purpose of her re-training.

"It's shaking once we're out on the open sea."

"Can't be helped, it's a small ship after all."

This ship's displacement is only about 100 tons. It's probably quite small for this world's seafaring ships.

"How long does it take until we reach Dejima Island?"

"I guess around 3 hours?"

"Ugeh, that's too long~"

Arisa grumbled while looking fed up.

"If you don't like the shaking, you should take shelter in the solitary island palace."

"Un, let me take you up on that offer."

There's no problem since the brownies are steering the ship.

Since all of them are wearing sailor uniforms and sailor hats, it feels like elementary schoolers are leading though.

"Master, is there any tuna around here?"

"Unfortunately, it seems there's none in this sea area. We can take the ship offshore later if you're worried about the tuna stock."

"Yes! Thank you very much!"

When I promise her that, Lulu shows a shining smile that won't lose to the sunshine.

"Master, I found a heap of birds at the port side."

Liza is staring at me with glistening eyes.

She must be waiting for my permission.

"You can go hunt them, but be careful not to be noticed by the ships ahead."

"Yes, I will be flying on the surface of the sea."

Liza runs on the sea surface while holding a spear.

She's carrying a harpoon for throwing since she's going in a hunt.

I saw Liza changed her flight course in the middle of the way and threw the harpoon at the birds.

Looks like she got a lot.

Since I'm planning to have our lunch on Dejima Island today, let's use those birds for dinner.



"Master, the water gate is opening so I inform."

Nana is pointing at a heavy-looking stone gate which protects Dejima Island's bay opening.

According to the map's information, that stone gate appears to be a big golem.

"Something's coming~?"

"There are people riding on top of the rays nodesu!"

A herd of flying rays which look like flying fish appeared from the gap of the opened gate, flying on the surface of the sea.

There are silver screws on their heads, the same magic tools that are used to manipulate monsters I've been seeing a lot, sealkin and gillman soldiers are riding on their backs.

Looks like they belong to the administration bureau of Dejima Island.

Five of the rays go around our ship, Tama and Pochi who are sitting on top of the mast as a watch are chasing them with their eyes, going round and round happily.

One of the rays jumped onto the deck, and a strong-looking gillman

soldier landed on the deck after rotating stylishly once in the air.
He's somewhat cool despite having the head of a fish.

"I'm Guzze of Dejima Island Harbor Authority. Cannons of ships entering the harbor will have to be stamped. Who's the captain here?"

This ship has no cannon, but since normally a seafaring ship has several magic cannons equipped, telling him that there's zero here will make it suspicious instead.

I extend my [Magic Hand] toward the part of the deck on his blind spot and then put two samples of magic cannon covered with cloth from my Storage.

"I'm the captain. The ship's magic cannons are over there, the two covered in cloth."

"Just two?"

I nod at the soldier who looks suspiciously.

"Because more than that is unnecessary--"

I gave a sign at Liza with a hand gesture while saying that.

Liza took the harpoon that was getting dried on the deck and lightly shot Magic Edge Cannon at the horizon beyond.

"We can repulse any monster as long as she's with us."

After seeing Liza's technique, the soldier's mouth and gills were opening and closing greatly, then after awhile he said, "I-It's fine then", stamped the two magic cannons with trembling hands, and left the deck.

--Come to think of it, it was a legendary technique or something.

We follow the soldiers and advance the ship into the bay where a lot of

boats are anchored.

"Trumpet?"

Mia muttered while tilting her head.

It's true, I hear sound of a trumpet out of nowhere.

The melody sounds kind of sorrowful, but it's quite good.

It seems a fat ratkin wearing gaudy clothes is playing it on top of the lighthouse at the end of the bay.

"The small boat of the harbor staff has come. We'll enter the harbor in accordance to their flags."

"Please."

Since the harbor is crowded with big ships, I entrust it to the skillful brownie to steer the ship.

"Have we finally entered the harbor?"

Arisa who heard that we had entered the harbor came back and looked restlessly at the surrounding ships.

"Saga Empire, Holy State Parion, Garleon Alliance, there sure are a lot of ships from various countries."

"Master, does that paddle steamer belong to Weasel Empire?"

Arisa pointed at a black colored big ship and asked.

"That's a Saga Empire's magic boat. The Weasel Empire's ship is that sailing ship with the oars."

"Hee, that's unexpected."

Checking the map, it seems the oars aren't rowed by slaves but small-sized living dolls and medium-sized golems.

"Is that volcano a labyrinth?"

"That's right."

Arisa points at an islet inside the bay.

It's raising white smoke similar to the Sakurajima in peacetime that I saw when I was touring Kyushuu.

It seems there's no lodging facilities on the islet, small boats boarded by people who look like explorers are shuttling between the main Dejima Island and the islet.



"Arr-riv-ved?"

"Landing nanodesu!"

Tama and Pochi who are wearing sailor uniforms like the brownies descend on the tramp with shutan poses.

"Are we going to meet Hayato first today?"

"The hero seems to be in the labyrinth still, so first I'll be going to meet the crown prince at last."

Guessing from the rotation of my regular communications with the hero so far, he's probably going to come out of Dejima Labyrinth in two to six days.

I already know from the map that the crown prince is away from Dejima Island, but if I don't at least try to do a courtesy call, they'll deem me as

impolite so I can't ignore it.

The president of Norouino Firm who has promised to meet me as Kuro is still at the Imperial Capital even now, so it seems there's still some time left.

Judging from his stamina that keeps depleting, it seems he's running around everywhere to meet my demand instead of slacking off.

"Gii~?"

"Darii nanodesu."

Using the mast, a simple crane lowers our carriage, and I've asked Mia and Lulu to pull two horses down the ramp.

The simple crane is operated manually by Nana and Lady Karina's human power.

The current Nana should be able to lower the carriage with her [Magic Arm] but it seemed she wanted to imitate the simple cranes of the surrounding ships so she didn't use force art.

"Master, we've prepared the carriage."

In front of Lulu who's acting as the coach after a long while, the cart-horses, Gii and Darii, snorted.

They seem to be eager to do their long-awaited turns. It might be unexpectedly because of the fodders I made that I gave them before this--
Heh, no way.

"Still, it's as lively as the trade city in Shiga Kingdom isn't it."

"Eel~?" <TLN: Utsubo.>

"Now that you've said it, that means grilled eel nanodesu." <TLN: Grilled eel= Tsuboyaki.>

Tama and Pochi said that while staring at the stalls for the port workers. There's no such stall--Perhaps, they wanted to say "Melting pot of races"?

<TLN: Jinshu no Rutsubo.>

"Master, then we will be off."

"Master, wait for good news so I tell."

"I'm counting on you, Liza, Nana."

Liza and Nana who are wearing formal dresses look fresh.

I've asked the two to send a letter asking for a meeting that I wrote to the Dejima Island's administration.

Liza and Nana ride on the carriage that Lulu operates.

Nana is at her own pace, but Liza who rarely rode a carriage looks a bit tense.

"Then, we'll be going."

"Once you're done with it, meet us at the inn with red rooftop in the square in front of the administrator bureau building, we'll be staying there."

"Yes, understood."

I told Lulu about the inn which I had checked beforehand with [Clairvoyance].

I waved my hands at the carriage that had begun to dash.



"Shellfish skewers, delish~?"

"The shellfish muscle is crunchy and tasty nodesu."

"It'd have been tastier if you put soy sauce on it--too bad desuwa."

I've taken the youth troupe and lady Karina along to the wharf for the small boats of the explorers.

I just wanted to collect some information and snack a little but--.

"Mwu, gear?"

"Is that a crystal gear?"

Stalls selling junks gotten in the labyrinth are lined up here.

There's a lot of things made of crystals which piqued Mia's interest.

Since the stalls are also buying things instead of just selling, heated negotiations between explorers and shopkeepers can be seen here and there.

"Oy oy, 300 swen you said, that's too low for Iatsupista."

"The market is oversupplied since the administration bureau has decreased their spending. I'll buy it for 310 swen."

"Make it 500 swen at least. If that's no good--then I'll sell to Norouino Firm with the other junks."

"Oy oy, don't lump me with the rip-off shop of that weasel guy."

"Aren't ya tanuki guy yourself, yer' not that different."

It seems the tanuki shopkeeper is mad at the human explorer's words, he's threatening him with bared fangs.

On the opposite side, a sealkin doctor and a lizardkin explorer is disputing about magic potions.

"Oy, doc! What the hell is this magic potion!"

"Hahn? Wasn't that the muscle reinforcement medicine I sold ya awhile ago--you heard it, right?"

"Yeah and it's way effective! My offensive power did rise greatly once I drank the magic potion!"

"Ain't that good."

"Yea it is--if only blood didn't gush out of my arms and stopped me from even holding a sword after the battle was over that is! We ran away from the labyrinth with our life on the line!"

The sealkin doctor smoothly evades the explorer who tried to grab his collar.

His gleaming body looks elastic like it's been plastered with oil.

"I did wrote the instruction right? 『It may affect the users after battle, please be advised』, there."

"Kuh, like I can read!"

A brawny tigerkin soldier who happens to pass by seems to be trying to mediate the explorer who's still trying to catch the doctor.

The merchants here somehow feel like the diminutive version of the weasel merchants I happened to see in Shiga Kingdom.

"Hey~, do you have any interesting tool?"

"Hahn? You're wearing some good clothes--You a daughter of noble?"

"Yes, that's right."

When Arisa combed her hair upward in front of a gnome's stall, the other girls imitated her and took the pose of 'combing hair upward'.

The stall keeper's eyes were deprived not by the children but by the movement of the breast of Lady Karina who took the pose too.

It's not of amorous nature, his face somehow looks like he's seen some unpleasant things.

Looks like they don't match the aesthetic sense of gnomes who have round barrel-like figures.

"Master! Look at this, look at this!"

Arisa pulled me to a stall with music boxes and spring-powered toys.

The shopkeeper said that they're magic tools, but they're all extremely common tools.

And, the thing that Arisa found was not those.

--Figurine?"

"Yes! And it's even Yamato-kun from 『Tennis X Hero』!"

I heard that name before--right, it's the protagonist of the shounen manga that Hikaru likes.

"Can I ask you where you got this?"

"Course it's from the 『Phantasmal Labyrinth』. Bought it from my regular customer, an adventurer. Think he said that he found it in a gray illusory town inside the labryinth."

I thought it was something sold by a teleported person of the past to raise money, that doesn't seem to be the case.

"Master, perhaps there's a place that connects that volcanic island and former world--er, somewhere in Japan."

Arisa told me while grasping her fist.

However, if such a convenient thing does exist, the hero should have said something during our regular communication.

I was going to say that to Arisa, but I lost to the homesickness in Arisa's eyes and didn't put it into words.

Instead, I speak these words.

"It's probably going to be awhile before the hero come out of the labyrinth, do you want to enter the labyrinth for a bit?"

"Yayy!"

"Wa~y?"

"Winning the case nanodesu!"

"Nn, exploration."

Following after Arisa who was pleasantly surprised, the children jumped happily, while Lady Karina who missed her chance was shifting her gaze between me and the children restlessly.

I grip a Weasel Empire's gold coin into the shopkeeper's hand, and ask about the information about the labyrinth explorer--they're called adventurers in weasel empire--who sold him the figurine.

The shopkeeper was hesitating at first, but once I asked the price of his goods, the figurines and music boxes, and bought them, he let it all out like an oiled cog.

The adventurer in question can't be found with the map search. He's probably currently exploring in another map, the [Phantasmal Labyrinth].

Some unfamiliar voices called out to me while I was writing the information I got into the Exchange Column's memo pad.

"--Huh? Satou?"

"And there's Honey-chan too."

I turn around and see people who shouldn't have been in this place.

15-8. Dejima Island (2)

*

Satou's here. Talking with a friend you haven't met for a long time until you lose sense of time. When both of you laugh it off since neither remember who's the other one after talking for a long time, I wonder if that's also a form of beauty.



"Tiger ears~?"

"It's the wolf ear person nanodesu!"

The ones behind us are the hero's followers, Rusus and Fifi. Since I barely got in contact with them in the Duchy Capital, it would have been bad if I didn't have the information from AR reading.

Why are these girls who should have been in the labyrinth with Hayato here?

"Uwaa, that's some terrible injuries...."

Arisa becomes speechless after seeing the two's bodies.

Rusus has lost her knee to below and her right arm, while Fifi's right leg has disappeared to near the pelvic. Her right eye patch doesn't seem to be a fashion but something to protect the eye that has lost its eyeball.

"We made a slight blunder in our fight with the demon lord you see."

"We're hanging around here since we're useless in battle until the artificial arms and legs arrive from Saga Empire."

Rusus and Fifi ridiculed themselves with light tones.

Limb loss is not something that rare in labyrinth city Selbira, but as vanguards of the hero party, measures should have been taken by all means to recover them.

"Did something happen to Loreiya-sama?"

I uttered the name of the holy magic quiet-type big-breasted beauty in the hero party.

She should be capable to recover limb loss, but if she had died, then perhaps they're low on elixirs.

"That girl is still with Hayato."

"With Rin and Merry too."

I'm bothered that they didn't mention Miss Wiyaryi the long-earkin archer.

"You two, this is not something to talk about in this traffic."

There was a girl with short stature behind them, I didn't see her before since she was hidden by the two's heights.

According to AR reading, she's also one of the hero's followers, Nono the secretary.

I often talked with her in our telecommunications, but she feels different than during the calls.

She's unexpectedly short, her height is about between Arisa and Lulu. Her face matches her age and her body line is undulated enough, so she's probably never mistaken for a child.

"Viscount Pendragon, please forgive our rudeness."

Nono who's more expressionless than Nana bows her head and apologizes

to me.

It seems there's a custom to bow one's head when you apologize in Saga Empire.

In order to continue the talk, or rather, to hear the present situation of Hayato and the others, we went with them to the inn they're staying.

"Gi~?"

"There's Darry too nodesu."

"Nn, correct."

The children are looking at a carriage with the Pendragon House Crest. I can't see Lulu anywhere, but according to the map, it seems she's in the rest area where the coachmen gather.

"You're right. Maybe that building is the administration office?"

I nod to Arisa's question.

"Can you tell Lulu that we're in this inn?"

"Nn, understood."

I was asking Tama, but the one answered was Mia who beat her flat chest full of confidence.

I let Mia be the messenger and ask Tama and Pochi to go with her just in case.



"Demon lord's curse?"

"Yes, we were unable to lift the curse even with the 『Wish Ring』."

When I asked the reason why they couldn't recover Rusus's and Fifi's limb loss, the hero's secretary Nono told me that it was because of the [Demon Lord's Curse].

There's no [Curse] status on the girls' AR reading.

"I'll get embarrassed if you stare that much nya."

"Want to rub them?"

Rusus is embarrassed, Fifi lifts her breasts from below.

Looks like they misunderstood me staring at their chests.

Fifi seems to like to tease people younger than her.

"Y-you can't."

"That's right, you can't desuwa."

Arisa and Lady Karina catch my arms from right and left.

Leaving Arisa's side aside, I can feel blissful sensation from the arm Lady Karina caught.

"It's a misunderstanding. I'm merely intrigued by this curse."

"『Demon Lord's Curse』 is not something that can be seen. Although, the Dragon Eyes of a true dragon might be able to see through the curse...."

By Dragon Eyes, it's the thing Liedill the Temple Knight has huh--.

I tried if I could see the miasma by using the same trick I used to obtain the Spirit Seer skill.

I wasn't expecting anything, but I can see something black wriggling at the edge of my view.

>[Miasma Seer] Skill Acquired

I immediately activated the skill and saw chains of black mist-like things

binding Rusus and Fifi. That's probably the miasma--[Demon Lord's Curse].

I feel that I can get rid of them if I touch them directly, but since hex-like things are located directly on top of their hearts, it's hard to do it without telling them the reasons.

I'll consult with Arisa and the others later for the best timing.

Once they're released from the curse, Loreiya should be able to restore their limbs with holy magic.



"The demon lord has joined hands with the 『Dungeon Master』?"

"Yes, we're convinced of that after the last battle with the demon lord. Before that, we thought that the demon lord himself was the Dungeon Master...."

Secretary Nono told us about the present situation of Hayato and the others.

"The rat demon lord escaped with teleportation in our first two encounters, and then we planned to seal teleportation for the third encounter and crush it to death."

"We used the 『Magic Eating Binding Chain』, an 『Artifact from the Age of Gods』, to seal his magic power, and then we just needed to defeat him but--"

Rusus and Fifi talked about their third battle with the demon lord.

Still, the demon lord here isn't a weasel but a rat huh. I was convinced that it was a weasel somehow.

"When the demon lord emitted purple light, he took out weapons from hero's country called 『Masin gan』 and 『Klaymor』 and went on a rampage."

"Really, we never thought he had such hidden tricks besides the transformation."

"I thought I'd die."

"At that time, we and Wi were seriously injured."

"We'd have died if Hayato wasn't there."

According to the two, while the [Magic Eating Binding Chain] was active, any magic, be it support magic or magic defense, were all nulled. It seems only hero's and demon lord's Unique Skills that could be activated during that time.

It appears this [Magic Eating Binding Chain] is far more powerful than the [Magic Eater] the weaselkin used in the war with Makiwa Kingdom. The [Magic Eater] is probably an inferior version recreated in present time.

"Nevertheless, Hayato managed to corner it to the limit, but then monsters suddenly flooded into the room from the exit and the demon lord escaped during that chance."

"Hey hey, from that story, it wouldn't be strange for the demon lord to be the Dun Mas right?" <TLN: Dungeon Master, abbr.>

Arisa asked Rusus who looked frustrated.

"The demon lord didn't touch the 『Dungeon Core』 you see."

"Your Highness Arisa, a Dungeon Master has to touch the 『Dungeon Core』 in order to manipulate the labyrinth."

The secretary Nono added Rusus's explanation.

They got the information from someone who was once a Dungeon Master.

Nono was being vague, but from the nuance, it seemed that either some past hero or their follower was a Dungeon Master.

"Shouldn't you just need to destroy the core first then?"

"That's impossible, Honey-chan."

"Right right, we'd have done it if we could."

Rusus and Fifi denied Arisa's question while smiling wryly.

"You can't interfere the Dungeon Core as long as the Dungeon Master isn't defeated."

Fumu, I've touched a Fake Core in the [Ivy Mansion] in the labyrinth city Selbira, but it appears the real Dungeon Core is something like a shadow.



"In other words, from now on you need to defeat both the demon lord and the Dungeon Master right?"

"Yes, it's impossible with our current force, but we've requested reinforcements from Saga Empire."

According to secretary Nono, Dejima Island's [Phantasmal Labyrinth] greatly branches in the middle layer on top of having its layout change every time, thus finding the demon lord and the Dungeon Monster that are located in the lowest layer requires a lot of manpower.

Arisa who's sitting beside me is pulling my sleeve.

When I turn to her, Arisa's large eyes are glittering.

I nod at her.

"We will cooperate too. Our power might not be enough to defeat the demon lord, but it might be what's needed to curb the Dungeon Master of the 『Phantasmal Labyrinth』."

If the reinforcements from Saga Empire prove to be useful, we can just change with them then.

Even without them, Hayato should be able to easily defeat the demon lord as long as there's no obstacle.

After all, it looks possible for Hayato to defeat the demon lord if the Dungeon Master doesn't interfere.

"--Then let us perform that plan if Hayato-sama approves of it once he's back."

"Yes, we wish to express our gratitude for Viscount Pendragon's cooperation."

Secretary Nono worked on the details as to how we're cooperating to search for the Dungeon Master, but left the final decision to Hayato.

"Satou and Honey-chan, what are you going to do until then?"

"In order to grasp the 『Phantasmal Labyrinth』's atmosphere, we're planning to enter it lightly on a day trip."

"The maze in that labyrinth changes frequently, so be careful okay."

Rusus exchanged such talks with Arisa.

If this were a game, it'd have been the 100-floor dungeon to enjoy, but when you're actually thrust to capture it in real life, it's most troublesome. It seems Hayato also had a hard time searching in the middle layer and beyond until the magic item, offered by the weaselkin, that could point at the direction of the demon lord came.

Rusus's and Fifi's ears are twitching.

At the same time, my Attentive Ears skill picked up the noise outside the inn.

"What's happening?"

"It sure is noisy outside."

Fifi nimbly gets up and goes to the window with a wand in hand.

"--Airships of Weasel Empire? And the three of them are of the high-speed destroyer type."

Fifi mutters while looking up at the sky, Secretary Nono who hears it stands up in surprise.

The crown prince seems to be visiting the imperial capital after all, maybe some political disturbance has happened in the Weasel Empire's Capital?

Opening the map, I see that there's a person with marker riding on that airship.

Why is she at this place... Political disturbance might be really happening in the central.

I heard noisy sounds of someone running up the stairs, and then a big-breasted woman wearing Saga Empire's civil official clothes rushed into the room without knocking.

She's never introduced her name, but it seems she's one of Saga Empire's officials who are stationed in Dejima Island working to support secretary Nono.

"Oh no, Nono-sama!"

Big-breasted aid-san hardened slightly.

She probably remembered that there were guests when she saw us.

"What is it."

"Y-yes! Actually--"

Urged by Nono, big-breasted aid-san recovered from her freeze and opened her mouth to report, but an intruder showed up faster than she could.

"P-please wait."

"You're in the way, move aside."

Someone wearing Saga Empire clothing outside the door resisted till the end, but a woman in armor forcibly pushed him away.

"Are you Saga Empire's hero? Pleased to meet you, I am one of the Temple Knights under direct control of his majesty the emperor, Liedill."

The one introducing herself while staring at me is the level 57 Temple Knight we met in Weasel Empire's Mogeiba City.

Leaving aside her incomprehensible pose, it appears she has wrongly guessed me as hero Hayato after seeing my black hair.

"Geh, it's the Kukkorosan."

Arisa muttered.

Even though Lady Liedill never uttered [Ku, Korose (Kuh, kill me)] even when she was cornered, it seems Arisa's mind has made up to give her [Kukkorosan] nickname.

"She didn't figure it out right?"

『All is fine, Karina-dono. You're heavily guarding it.』

Since Lady Karina asked Raka nervously in whisper, I stand up from the chair, and walk a step forward to hide her from Lady Liedill's line of sight.

"Nice to meet you, Liedill-sama. I'm Viscount Satou Pendragon of Shiga

Kingdom."

"--Eh, Shiga Kingdom?"

I lightly cleared her misunderstanding and introduced myself. Lady Liedill who had become aware of her misunderstanding froze in surprise.

Rusus and Fifi are openly showing their wariness as they grab the handles of largish knives behind the cushions.

Nono stands beside me with a firm manner.

"Temple Knight-dono, Hero Hayato-sama is currently inside the 『Phantasmal Labyrinth』 to defeat the demon lord. Temple Knight-dono wouldn't have wasted her time in vain if you had just informed us beforehand...."

She was saying it politely but she clearly reproved Lady Liedill's visit without an appointment.

"Is that so, then it can't be helped."

Lady Liedill muttered without even being aware that she was getting reproved.

Her glare which was pointed at the air turned to me.

"Hey, you. Have we met somewhere?"

"There is no way that I would forget an encounter with such a beauty as you, just where have we met I wonder?"

While putting both my hands on Lady Liedill's hand, I befuddled the matter with a line from some smooth talker.

I could have said, "We've never met before", since I was in ratkin costume when I met her, but since the Deception and Crisis Perception skills told me that telling a lie would be dangerous, I decided to take the question-

dodging route.

"Let go, how filthy."

Lady Liedill brushed my hand away and glared at me like looking at a dirt. Apparently, she's a clean-freak.

Arisa is wiping my hand with a handkerchief while saying, "It really is."
--Please stop provoking her.

"My Dragon Eyes tell me. I've absolutely met you guys somewhere before."
"Perhaps it was in Shiga Kingdom's Royal Capital? Sorry but we've just arrived here at Dejima Island, so we've yet to attend any ball or banquet here."

Lady Liedill said so with eyes full of conviction.
Normally you'd have resigned here, but since her eyes are relatively bad, I'll just deceive her.

Lady Karina who's sweating waterfall behind me is a reason for anxiety, but Arisa and Mia should be doing something about her.

And then, a male temple knight I saw in the Weasel Empire before rushed in.

It's the escort knight of Lady Liedill.

"Liedill-sama!"

"Oh? You're late."

Contrary to the desperate escort knight, Lady Liedill replied normally while still not letting her eyes away from me.

"It looks like the hero is not here. Rather than that, have you ever seen this black haired kid?"

"No, I haven't--"

"Is that so.... That's strange."

Losing her vigor after hearing the escort knight, Lady Liedill was dragged away by the other knights who came later.

"Everyone, you might have taken offense from Liedill-sama's impoliteness, but we beg your forgiveness."

The leader-kun of the escort knights apologized for their master, and left after saying that they would formally apologize later.

"Somehow it seems like they'll barge into the battle with the demon lord too."

"Isn't that fine, they'll be additional forces then."

"Well yeah. Let them get stylishly beaten by the demon lord and become hero's and our stepping stones."

Secretary Nono showed a dark smile and said "That would be nice" to reply Arisa's dark remark, and then both of them are laughing "Hohoho" together.

The two's eyes aren't laughing, Lady Karina and even Rusus and Fifi look scared.



"Delish!"

"Amazing."

Rusus and Fifi highly praised the karage Lulu made.

After the disturbance with Lady Liedill, my companions and the house-sitting group of the hero party met up and then we had a party in a

reserved room of the high-class inn.

"Of cour~se?"

"Lulu's dishes are amazingly amazing nodesu!"

Tama and Pochi who saw Rusus and Fifi praising the dishes asserted vigorously, stepping forward on top of the table.

"Un, it's really good. This red sour fruit is especially nice."

"Wi, which one do you want next?"

"Then, please get the rod-shaped vegetable with meat wrapped around it."

Miss Wiyaryi, the long ear-kin archer, enjoyed the tomato dish.

The reason secretary Nono is diligently looking after her is because she's lost her limbs in the fight with the demon lord.

There are other aids here, but it seems Nono personally takes care of her. The two seem to be close.

"Asparagus meat roll is tasty so I tell."

"Mwu, sukiyaki."

Nana nodded with Miss Wiyaryi's choice, Mia raised an objection, telling that the sukiyaki is better.

Looks like Mia still dislikes dishes with a lot of oil even though she's able to eat meat now.

"Here comes the main!"

"Yay~"

"Nanodesu!"

Arisa and the others who saw the main dish that appeared on the door raised their voices in joy.

"Thank you for waiting."

"The main dish is a whole roast cow."

Liza and Lulu put the huge plate on the middle of table.

Even though I know that they have mighty strength due to their levels, seeing young girls carrying whole roast of a one-ton class cow, that's impossible even for men with good builds to carry, is quite an unrealistic scene.

The reason why we're serving meat even though we're in a port town is because it was the request of the hero's staff who had gotten bored of fish. Well, my companions like meat more than fish too.

"Master, here you go."

"Thank you, Liza."

Liza put a plate with the spoil from the scramble for the whole roast front of me.

"Yup, it's good. Liza too, eat it too before it's gone."

"Yes, then I'll kindly accept--"

Liza jumps into the scramble (battlefield) with eyes of a warrior.

The whole roast's shape changed in an instant into bones so clean it probably wouldn't be sufficient to even make soup stock.

Now then, now that I'm full, I'll finish the thing I have to do before going into the labyrinth.

15-9. Phantasmal Labyrinth

*

Satou's here. I think I first learned yobai from a manga about nobles of Heian era. The figures of the main character of a shoujo manga who shouted molester and kicked the head of a noble and the dumbfounded expression of the kicked noble left an impression on me.



"Good evening, thieves here."

"Stop saying unnecessary things."

After whacking the head of Arisa who's dressed up like a thief, I walk to the bedside where Miss Wiyaryi is sleeping.

This somehow feels indecent, like I'm a man doing yobai.

I'm not intruding a woman's room in the middle of the night to do lewd things.

It's to restore the limbs of hero's companions.

"Advanced mind magic is amazing isn't it. You can prank them all you want."

Arisa says some impolite thing while poking the long ear of Miss Wiyaryi who's in a deep sleep.

Miss Wiyaryi isn't the only one sleeping, everybody in the inn including the hero's party has all fallen asleep.

"Still, you wouldn't need to make them sleep if you just used 『Geass』 to keep it a secret you know."

"It's less troublesome this way right?"

Moreover, my purpose is restoring their limbs, I don't intend to make them indebted to me.

"Let's begin--"

While rejecting the idea, I put Miss Wiyaryi onto a transparent bed made from [Magic Mold] and ask Arisa to take off her clothes.

Of course I've asked her to cover her with a cloth since we're not going to do anything perverted.

"First, I'll cleanse the miasma."

I activate [Miasma Seer] and look at Miss Wiyaryi's stumps.

I can see ominous black mist coming from the stumps binding Miss Wiyaryi's body.

I've taken off her cloth in order to see her whole body, but during the activation of the Miasma Seer, my view becomes like a negative film on top of being monochrome so there's nothing lewd to it at all.

I tear off the miasma aka the demon lord's curse like untying entangled thread.

It was quite firm and complexly intertwined but I succeeded in about 10 minutes.

"Collecting samples."

I reproduce Miss Wiyaryi's limbs from the blood collected from her.

With advanced force magic, cloning is not a problem even without the pluripotent cell as long as it's from the person themselves, though people who know the particulars from modern science will probably look at it scrutinizingly. As expected of fantasy.

"Reopening the wound."

Using Magic Edge extended from my finger, I cut the stump and reopen the wound.

It'll be dangerous if she bleed too much, so I press the wound with a transparent cover made from force magic [Magic Mold].

"Lost limb, rejoining."

Once I press the limb I made earlier on the stump and sprinkle an elixir on it, it's stickied properly.

Using the advanced soul magic [Perfect Possession] I posses Miss Wiyaryi and check the connected arm.

"Success."

"Uwaah, I thought she woke up."

I inadvertently talked with Miss Wiyaryi's mouth since I was too delighted for the success.

I go back to my original body and apologize to Arisa.

"--Sorry, I forgot to come back. Let's continue, Arisa."

"Okay!"

I connected Miss Wiyaryi's remaining limbs and then went around to restore Rusus's and Fifi's lost limbs.

Of course, I had also restored Fifi's eye.

"Next, let's just leave a letter."

I put a letter with hero Nanashi's signature regarding the limb loss restoration and the way to rehabilitate for them afterward on secretary Nono's bedside.

Once we got back to our room I released the magic, called the girls who

had evacuated to the solitary island palace back here and then we slept in the bed.



"Satou! It's serious!"

"Get up! This is serious!"

Early in the morning Rusus and Fifi rushed into my room half naked.

They're only wearing low-rise pants and short shirts with exposed navels. The lively dynamic movement is peculiar to no-bra.

"Good morning. Rusus-san, Fifi-san--You two, what happened to those arms and legs!"

While pretending to be surprised, I get up from the bed and walk toward the two.

Nana and the children in the bed raised their heads while rubbing their eyes.

In addition, Liza who has already woken up is swinging her spear in the courtyard, while Lulu seems to be doing morning exercise beside her.

"They were already restored when we got up this morning!"

"We thought you did something."

The two who are in high tension caught my arms and swung them up and down.

I'm troubled where to see due to the masses that are swinging together with the arms.

"Fuh, you two are fast!"

Miss Wiyaryi showed up from behind them.
She looks unsteady, it seems her limbs are still weak.

As she stagger, I extend my hands to support her.

"Thank you, Satou."

Even the calm Miss Wiyaryi seems to be happy with her restored limbs, she's overflowing with smiles.

"By the way, did Satou cause this miracle?"

After saying that, Miss Wiyaryi hugs me without even waiting for my reply.

She's the least sexy member of the hero party, but it appears she's simply the type who looks slender in clothing.

"W-wait! What are you doing to Master!"

"Mwu, guilty."

The impregnable fortress pair tried to crawl out of the bed, but it seems they're still sleepy, they can't move well.

"What are you doing this early in the morning."

Secretary Nono scolded the three with a sharp expression.

Despite being early in the morning, she's properly wearing her uniform--
huh?

"Nono, skirt."

"You forgot it you know?"

"Fumu, so Nono has reached the age where she wants to seduce

youngsters."

Nono couldn't understand what the three were talking about and had a face that seemed like there was a question mark above her head, but her face turned red when she looked below.

"I-I'm sorry, I'll go fix it right away."

Nono screamed and rushed out.
Apparently, she has airhead element too.

Nono who came back after a while told the three girls that it was hero Nanashi who restored their limbs, and the morning uproar came to an end.



"It's such a shame~"

"Are you still going on about that?"

"I mean, it's a chance to increase Master's sympathizers."

Arisa grumbled when we were on the ferryboat going to the islet where the labyrinth is.

What am I going to do with having sympathizers in the first place.

Only the members of Team Pendragon including Lady Karina are going to the labyrinth.

Rusus and the others are doing rehabilitation in the training school at the verge of the town.

They said that they would return to form before the hero came back.

"Arisa, leave it at that."

"Nn, rivals unnecessary."

Liza reproved Arisa, Mia nodded at her.

The ferryboat arrived at the labyrinth islet when we were talking as such.

"Fish~?"

"There's a lot of small fish nanodesu."

From the wharf you can see a school of Sardine-like fish swimming in the sea.

Feels like you can get a lot just by casting a net.

"Oy, you guys over there, new faces right?"

A rugged middle-aged man who looked like a fisherman came over to us.

"You're being rude to Master."

Liza points her magic spear at the man.

"Whoops, what a scary Anee-chan. Lower your spear, I ain't here to pick a fight."

The middle-aged man took a surrendering pose at the threatening Liza and stepped back one step.

"The labyrinth entrance is over there, but first timer must go to that Adventurer Guild's assembly hall following the procedure."

After pointing at the volcano in the center of the labyrinth islet, the man jerked his chin at a gray building at the end of the harbor.

"There's a lot of adventurer applicants making trouble at the simple reception desk in front of the labyrinth so I'm telling this to first timers."

I see, both are quite far apart.

I can see many people complaining.

I thank the man, and make him grasp one silver coin worth of swen as thanks and apology for Liza's hastiness.

"Whoa, Nii-chan knows his stuff~. Talk with the racoonkin wearing ocher overcoat in the middle of that hill--he's a former adventurer and know a lot 'bout monsters ya know."

After saying that, the man charges at a nearby bar while swinging the swen paper money gleefully.



"That really was the template wasn't it."

Arisa reminisces the things at the adventurer guild assembling hall while holding a guild license satisfyingly.

"Adventurer rank that goes from F to A, the long line for the beautiful receptionist, the old man receptionist who turned out to be the guild master, and the many requests on the bulletin board! Everything that should be in an adventurer guild~"

The other girls are looking warmly at Arisa who's chattering like singing. Lady Karina is the only one who's in high spirit besides Arisa.

"It seems to imitate Saga Empire's adventurer guild desuwane."

"Hee, is that so?"

"Yes, it was written in father's literary work."

Lady Karina and Arisa had that conversation as we were climbing the mountain path to the labyrinth.

Lady Karina's father, Earl Muno is a guru of hero research so one of his research subjects was probably about the adventurer guild created by the first generation hero.

There's a racoonkin wearing ocher overcoat in the middle of the hill road to the labyrinth.

The racoonkin taught us about the main monsters of the labyrinth when I told him that were referred by a man in the harbor.

"--Well, that's mostly it. First, approach with wait and see attitude. Don't forget to bring Return Stick and Disturb Ball with you. Don't rely on maps."

I paid the information with swen notes and left the place after thanking him for the kind advice.

Besides Magic Cores, it seems there's only a few things that can be exchanged for money in the upper layer, and the enemies are mostly of Living Dolls and Iron Golems from beginning to the end of the upper layer.

"Potatoes~?"

"Grilled salted fish nanodesu."

"It seems there aren't any meat even though we're in front of the labyrinth are there?"

The beastkin girls are peering at the food stalls lined up in front of the labyrinth.

"Noble-sama over there! How about a map? 20 maps for 1000 swen, only for today!"

A peddling man came to sell a bundle of paper.

The path structure of Dejima Island [Phantasmal Labyrinth] changes everytime, so there's a lot of people who try to rip off beginners by selling maps.

"Guess I'll buy it if it's nicely made."

"Hehhee, our maps are awesome y'know."

The map he's showing full of confidence is filled to the brim you wouldn't have thought it was a fake.

There's not only the pathways, even room locations, danger zones, watering holes and many kind of information are written.

Doing this far, it's amazing even though it's a fraud.

The girls are looking at me with questions in their eyes, so I tell them that I have an idea with eye contacts.

Arisa replied with an awkward wink, but I continued without retorting her specifically.

"That is because they're made by a B-rank adventurer who's working as a mapper in Saga Empire."

"Looks good, I'll buy it."

"Thank you for your business!"

I put the map into the Storage through the storage bag.

"Why did you buy it even though you knew that it was a fraud?"

"Besides the passage ones, the information might be useful."

Even if it was a fraud, I only lost 1000 swen of money that can't be used anywhere but in Weasel Empire.

"Buy a Disturb Ball! They're a bargain cause they're made of volcanic ash!"

"Do you have Monster Wards ready? Ya can't take a break if you don't have them!"

"Phantasmal Labyrinth beginners absolutely have to bring a Return Stick! Or else you won't be able to go back!"

"We're the branch shop of Bosu Magic Store! Magic potion is currently 300 swen!"

Merchants are flooding to me with their goods, perhaps due to me buying the maps.

I might as well buy various local products.

They were overcharging the goods, so Arisa and Lulu quickly haggled it down.

Further, it seems Return Stick isn't a teleportation item that returns you back to the labyrinth entrance often appearing in games, but an item that lights up at the direction of the exit.

"Aren't they the same things as the ones in the labyrinth city Selbira besides this Return Stick?"

"They probably are."

I affirm Arisa's question.

These are souvenirs for Echigoya Firm's craftsmen.

Perhaps there are hints of unexploited technology in them.



"How is it?"

"The hero seems to be fine. None of his companions have serious injury either."

After registering at the entrance, we went through the gate advancing through a downward slope.

Checking with All Map Exploration, it seemed the hero party was in the middle of the way to the supply base in the middle layer from the lowest layer.

It's confusing because this Phantasmal Labyrinth's structure resembles that of tree branches.

It's similar to the Seryuu City [Demon Labyrinth] where I made an escape with the beastkin girls.

The difference with tree branches is the existence of rhizome-like big empty holes here and there in the branches that extend to the middle layer.

The majority of the enemies are golems and undeads, they were clogging the passages in places of walls that have been broken down even while I was observing them.

I thought it would be like the [Trazayuya Maze] after hearing that the passages changed at fixed intervals, but unlike the Maze that somehow felt mechanical, the structure change feels like labyrinths in stories with Dungeon Masters.

The demon lord who's become this labyrinth's Dungeon Master might be someone who loves stories with Dungeon Masters.

If he acquired the figurines we saw the other day by using Dungeon Point, I'd like to ask if he is able to get the latest issue of Dradra Magazines.

I sure want to read the continuation of the currently serialized [The Golden Legend of Army Only] and [Saeteru Kanojo no Trinity].

--Whoops, my thought wandered off.

I tried to search the map but I couldn't find the Dungeon Master. I've expected this since I also couldn't find it in Seryuu City's [Demon Labyrinth] and Selbira's Labyrinth.

The Dungeon Master must be hiding in a different map.

And, the demon lord in question is still surviving even with wounds all over his body, he's in a different lowest layer where the hero party were. His level is 64, slightly low, and just like Arisa, his skills are hidden, shown as [Skill: Unknown].

In addition to the orthodox [Demon Lord] title, he also has hidden titles; [Chased One], [Oppressed One], [Small Rebel], and [Artist].

Did this guy became a demon lord due to oppression?
I'm slightly intrigued by the demon lord's origin.



"It sure is crowded."

"It's the same as Selbira right?"

Several adventurer parties are fighting against monsters in the hall we arrived at the end of a narrow downward passage.

Varieties of Mad Golem called Ash Mud Golems and Silent Ash Golems seem to be the starting enemies here.

There's a constant color-changing fog in this labyrinth, so the view is bad even in the hall.

Moreover, there are infinite varieties of projected phantoms inside the thick fog, ranging from realistic images to dim silhouettes, so even adventurers who are used to Phantasmal Labyrinth can get surprised by

the projections.

Sometimes Silent Ash Golems slip in the fog and attack with no footstep, so it's quite a repulsive labyrinth.

I have Radar, so I know where the enemies are coming from, but it must be hard for common adventurers.

"Fiire~?"

"Lots of magicians nanodesu."

Tama and Pochi point at the firing line beyond the fog.

It seems there are magicians among the adventurers, red flames sometimes illuminate the dim cave.

Most of those flame users must be using Fire Wands since there's only a few who have Fire Magic in their skill compositions.

"This seems ideal for friendly fires to happen..."

"Nn, dangerous."

"Ah, the shield user was shot with a small fire ball from behind."

There's a lot of people who are used to it, maybe because we're near the entrance.

"High so~?"

"They're fleeing here nodesu."

Unable to watch the fleeing party, Liza turns toward me.

"Master, may I intervene?"

"Okay."

When I nod back, Liza throws a stone below into the air upward with her tail, and then Pochi strikes the stone with her sword still in the sheath.

The stone defeats the Ash Mud Golem in one strike, and the stone that pierced it is caught by Tama who has circled around before anyone knew it.

Tama announced, "Striike~", but if I have to say, I think it's a dead ball.

"Master~?"

Tama came back with a small magic core and an ocher colored stone.

"Uwah, it's a Golem Soul...."

"So something like that can pop up in this shallow place!"

"Alright, let's get one too!"

The adventurers who saw the stone Tama was carrying became noisy, and then the attack against the Ash Mud Golems became more furious.

Since the adventurer party that we saved had already left the room, there was no one who disputed the ownership of the mysterious Golem Soul item.

"T-thank you very much, elf-sama."

"Nn."

The female bearkin whose back was burned by the friendly fire thanked Mia for giving her healing magic.

It seems she's been abandoned by the party earlier.

I took a pity on her a bit so I presented her half a year worth of diluted healing magic potion as a charm.

They were something I hoarded in my Storage since I had no use of them, but with her level, one of them should be enough to recover her from a dying state.



"Footsteps~?"

"Doka doka sounds nodesu."

"Looks like some enemies are chasing after adventurers."

"Geh, bringing Train here, what bad manners."

The radar shows monsters of varying sizes chasing after two adventurer parties.

As we advance while defeating some Ash Mud Golems, an agile-looking male scout shows up running in the corridor in front of us.

"You guys, run! Iron Golem is coming!"

Middle-aged adventurers carrying swords and wands who seem to be his companions run past us.

"Not good, it's catching up."

The second party seems to be adventures with heavy knight-like armors. Since their movement was slow due to their heavy equipment, the Iron Golem almost caught up to them.

The Iron Golem is big enough to have to bend over in this three meter high passage.

Pale red driving light leak out from its inside.

"Damn it, I'll get one hit at least!"

"Fool! Don't stop!"

"Tsk, that idiot!"

The heavy armor party whose companion was trampled under the golem's

foot stopped and turned back at the golem.

They tried to challenge it with a huge axe and a fire wand, but they got trampled under the feet just like their comrade earlier.

It seems they're still alive, so we can't desert them.

"Liza."

"Understood."

The Magic Edge Cannon shot by Liza pierces through the Iron Golem's head before it could trample the last heavy armor adventurer.

The golem producer here doesn't seem to know the true joke material as the golems aren't so easy as to be defeated just by erasing a letter. Of course, Liza's Magic Edge Cannon would destroy it in one hit no matter where it hit, but--.

"KARINA--KIIIIIIICK"

Clad in blue light, Lady Karina sunk her sure-death kick at the chest of the Iron Golem.

The red driving light inside the golem disappears.

"Goodjob~?"

"Karina, you're great nodesu."

It was actually an overkill, but Tama and Pochi praised Lady Karina without minding it.

Lady Karina turned around while looking like it was not all that bad.

"May I ask about the technique earlier?"

Lady Karina's smile froze at the owner of the voice who appeared from behind the Iron Golem.

Well now, how to get through this.

I refreshingly smile back at Lady Liedill's party who show fearless smiles.

15-10. Phantasmal Labyrinth (2)

*

Satou's here. It's said that there are three people who have the same face in the world, but looking at the likelihood of those people meeting with each other, I think accidental resemblance is more common.



"U-um, this is, uh"

Lady Karina is flustered to see Lady Liedill who appeared from the opposite side of the Iron Golem.

However, there's something else that has caught my attention.

"H-hey, Master, what should we do?"

"Nothing."

I lightly cut off Arisa's worry, pats her shoulder and points at Liedill.

"--Ah"

"You understand?"

"Y-yes. Shall I do it instead?"

"No, I'm happy with just the thought."

I don't really want to do it but it'd be a mistake to let the children to. This is something that I must do.

"Sa-Satou."

"It's alright."

After nodding at Lady Karina who looks uneasy, I step forward in front of

her.

"....U-uu."

A groan came from the golem's wreckage.

Oops, I've got to deal with that one first.

I chantlessly healed the trampled adventurers who were dying and then I made them sleep with mind magic chantlessly too.

After I'm done with the emergency task, I head to Liedill.

"Oh? Perhaps you'd be the one explaining--"

Without waiting until the end, I kick Liedill's stomach, flinging it away at the line of the escort who are standing still behind.

As an insurance, I also use earth magic's [Toss Drill Stone] to skewer it and the escort together.

"M-Master?"

"Sa-Satou?"

Seeing my brutality, Liza and Lady Karina are shaken.

The other girls are also shaken with different reactions.

"Uwah, gross."

"Don't worry be happy~?"

Only Arisa and Tama are reacting differently.

However, besides the two's, the voices tapered off.

"Uhyaa, so that's what Doppelganger like."

"Nopperabou~?"

"It dissolves like, slush nodesu."

"Master, requesting provision of information."

I explain to the girls while glancing at the log.

The brief words from Arisa already explained it all though.

"The monster earlier is called Doppelganger, a monster that can steal a part of someone's memory and assume the appearance of a person."

Arisa was deceived at first, but she realized immediately once she appraised her.

In the first place, there's no way that I won't notice Lady Liedill, who has been marked, once she enters the Radar's range.

"You can't let your guard down with people you meet in the labyrinth even if you know them okay?"

The girls cheerfully replied me positively.

The reason why I'm telling the girls that is because judging from the fact that there was no one we met who warned us about the monster and that there is no other Doppelganger inside the labyrinth, that means it was probably prepared by the Dungeon Master who got flustered since some high level adventurers entered the labyrinth.

There's a room fully loaded with water and paralyze traps at the end of one of the long passages from the large room where the Doppelgangers and the Iron Golem appeared.

The Doppelgangers earlier were probably going to lead us there.

Further, there might have been a gentler way to defeat them, but I did what I did since I wanted to defeat them before my companions did. I don't want to see the girls killing beings that look like people after all.



"Putting your name in your technique's name is really not a good idea."

--Uu."

"Why~?"

"It's cool nodesuyo?"

Lady Karina faltered with Arisa's frank advice, Tama and Pochi covered for her.

"Even after you hide your figure, if you shout a technique name like that out loud, you can end up in trouble like just now right?"

"Oo~ops~?"

"Ah, nanodesu."

Tama and Pochi who heard the explanation were surprised.

Don't tell me, they only noticed it just now?

"Recommending to change the name so I advice."

"That's right...."

Nana spoke calmly, Liza hesitated.

As for me, I don't intend to force Lady Karina to correct it since her clumsiness is within my tolerance, but it appears the other girls don't think so.

"Sa-Satou won't tell me to change it too right?"

"Yes, it's fine--"

Lady Karina looks relieved when I affirm her.

--As long as you stay behind when we're on missions where we need to disguise ourselves that is."

Even though I followed up with a smile, Lady Karina's face looks like she's having a monologue, "I've been betrayed."

--Incomprehensible.

"Then, since Karina-sama agrees too--"

Arisa begins to take ideas for the new technique name beside the dispirited Lady Karina.

"The first meeting~ Karina Kick new technique naame~ Naming conventioon~"

She's using some strange intonation, it must be some kind of reference.

"The safe one would be 『Oppai Kick』 I guess?"

"Arisa, take this seriously. How about 『Jump Kick』?"

"『Inazuma Fall』 is nice so I suggest."

"Mwuu, Swooping Kick Strike."

Liza reproved Arisa for her joking remark, Nana and Mia suggested some acceptable names.

And--.

"Meat Attack~?"

"Hamburg Steak sounds stronger nanodesu. Hamburg Steak Kick is good nodesu!"

--Triggered by Tama and Pochi, the suggestion for the technique names all became of dishes name, so the naming convention came to a close prematurely.



"This is the place where the figurines were found?"

Arisa tilted her head at a shrine-like place inside the labyrinth.
She probably feels the gap between the anime figurine and the place.

"Nope, there's a hidden passage inside that shrine, and that place seems to be at the end of that passage."

The inside of the shrine is decorated with many stone statues.

"Uwaah, the Star Oni Girl Lovely Momo, and there's even Mecha Girl Version of the Space Warrior Random. The guy who created these must be quite an enthusiast."

Arisa voiced her admiration, but I don't know the sources for half of the statues.

I pulled the excited Arisa's hand and we entered the hidden door.

"The fog is thick. Tama, Pochi, be on the lookout."

"Aye aye sir~?"

"Roger nanodesu."

Tama puts her hands on her ears strengthening her hearing, Pochi closes her eyes and sniffs the surrounding smell.

Before long, we see the shadow of buildings beyond the fog.

This place seems to be a phantom town block filled with gray rocks.

"This looks like a gray rock street doesn't it."

"Yeah, it's like a petrified Akiba."

This place is not that large, yet there are several multi-floor buildings and

asphalt-like road carved from gray rocks.

A familiar townscape with unfamiliar signboards--the one who created this real-sized models of the street is probably a reincarnated or a transported person from Japan that resembles mine.

"This upright cabinet is empty inside too."

"That seems to be the case."

Apparently there's nothing of worth here.

"Master!"

"Master, a discovery so I inform."

When I turned toward Lulu and Nana, I saw half-petrified manga books on the ground.

Many badly made figurines are piled up beside them.

It looks like they're transformed into stone from material build-up.

"Master, that!"

Arisa pointed at a scribble-like brush writing.

"『I want to go home』 huh--"

The scribble is hard to read, but that's certainly what's written in Katakana.

We didn't find a gate that connects to our world, but it's certain that a reincarnated or perhaps a teleported person had come here.

Perhaps, the demon lord in this labyrinth created weapons using the same mean.



"That reminds me, is the real Kukkorosan in the labyrinth?"

"Yes, it seems they're exploring in the middle layer."

They were already there when we entered the labyrinth.

They must have gone into the labyrinth not long after their intrusion incident yesterday.

Lady Liedill's stamina gauge has decreased more than half, it seems they're forcing themselves.

"--Huh?"

"What's wrong?"

Lady Liedill's state on the map has changed to [Panic].

When I peer the room where she is with space magic [Remote View]--.

"They are in serious trouble somehow."

The scene and sound projected by Remote View magic in mind is just like pandemonium from a disaster film.

『U-uwah, there's something inside the slime.』

『Ma-magician-dono? Where are you Magician-dono!』

『Th-there's snakes inside the slime!』

『Liedill-sama, please escape alone!』

『I will not abandon you guys.』

Lady Liedill and her party are sinking into a sea of slime inside a room that's similar to the room we were going to be entrapped earlier.

Furthermore, there are tentacle-shaped monsters called [Slime Leech] that are in symbiosis with the slimes, they appear to coil around their enemies

and pull them into the symbiotic slime to suffocate them to death.

Defeating the slimes is easy by using ranged attack, but unlike in the game, their bodies won't disappear even after they've died so it won't really help the situation.

It's as it were flooding by slimes.

In addition, the slimes are called Lake Slimes, they seem to be of a different species than the common slime.

『This level of slimes, I'll just burn them down!』

『Fool! We're in underground here!』

『Suffocating to death would be better than getting eaten like this!』

This is bad.... The desperate magician has begun to chant an advanced fire magic spell.

If she used that in such a closed room, every one of them wouldn't come out of it with just major burn.

『Don't give up! We are not warriors that will fall behind this degree of enemies!』

Lady Liedill's clear voice remonstrates her companions who are consumed by despair.

Lady Liedill fills her two-handed magic sword with magic power, the red light shines on her companions.

『True Temple Knights are--』

And then, the Slime Leechs twine on her legs while her expression is still serious and pulls her into the Lake Slime in an instant.

I don't know how to react since it was too embarrassing.

『Revenge for Liedill-sama!』

The magician fires the advanced magic and shouts while crying bitter tears.

No no, she's not dead yet.



"Uwah, erotic."

I put Lady Liedill and her companions I pulled here using space magic on the floor.

This is one of the room at the end of a passage from the place where we defeated the Doppelgangers earlier.

It's not the trap room one of course.

Just as Arisa said, on top of their disheveled armor and clothing, they're covered in slimy liquid, so they look like inhabitants of the 18+ world. The slimy liquid is the remain of the slime which had undergone change after getting burned by the fire magic.

I entrust Lulu and the others to care for Lady Liedill and the female magician, while I recover the burly men with healing magic and life magic in a pack.

Half of them were charred by the advanced fire spell, but they all barely made it thanks to their levels, resistances, equipment and support magic.

I recovered the people who were drowned in the slime with my original magic [Lifesaving: Respiration].

I also have a magic to shock the heart [Lifesaving: AED] though there's no

opportunity to use it now.

"T-this place is--"

"Have you awoken?"

Lady Liedill who woke up first muttered with hoarse voice.

Lulu and the others have fixed up their clothing as much as possible. They'll get undone if they move too much, so I probably have to warn the careless Lady Liedill.

"--Did I survive."

Lady Liedill stares at the finger in front of her face, gets half of her body up painfully and looks around.

Her body seems weak, so I support her back.

"Good, everyone is alright..."

After putting her companions into her view, she breathed a sigh of relief. I offer Lady Liedill whose voice is hoarse a cup of water.

"Ah, thank you--"

Our eyes meet as Lady Liedill inclines the cup.

Her relaxed expression changed in an instant, her eyes opening wide.

"--You're, Satou!"

While gushing water out of her mouth, Lady Liedill stepped back vigorously enough to use Flickering Movement.

As promised, her armor and clothes which were only fixed as needed couldn't endure the inertia and scattered away.

"Hyaaa--"

She covered her thin breasts in a hurry.

I hand over a cloth I took from the storage bag to Tama who was watching on the sideline.

"I'll leave it to you."

"Aye~"

Tama used Flickering Movement while crouching, moving next to Lady Liedill.

Is she mimicking Lady Liedill's movement earlier?

"Use it~?"

"M-my gratitude."

After I've made sure that she's finished wearing the cloth, I step forward while being careful not to alert her.

"It was really surprising. Just when were taking a break in this room, Liedill-sama and her companions appeared out of thin air."

"--Appeared out of thin air?"

Hearing my fabricated story supported by Deception skill, Lady Liedill's raised her eyebrows as if she couldn't believe it.

"Yes, you must have an excellent space magician."

"N-no, none of my subordinates can use space magic."

"Then it was a Weasel Empire's magic device for emergency escape wasn't it. Giving such an important item like that, His Majesty the Emperor must really cherish the Temple Knights."

"Y-yes--That's right."

I forcefully steered the talk to a good story type.

We're in the upper layer, so normally one wouldn't think that the we saved them who were in the middle layer.



"Then please excuse us. The exit is nearby, but please be careful."

"Ah, you too be careful. There's something different about this labyrinth--"

Lady Liedill leads her companions who have woken up toward the exit.

"Satou, if you're interested in Temple Knights--No, you're an authority of Shiga Kingdom aren't you. Our gratitude for the support and treatment earlier. We will properly thank you later."

Lady Liedill tried to invite me, but she changed her mind and stopped in the way.

Her gaze feels like they've softened up somewhat, is it just my imagination I wonder.

"Wait now~ stop raising flags here and there please."

"Nn, affable."

"You're right, I'll be careful."

I lightly waived off Arisa and Mia's complaint, and we went back to the labyrinth exploration.

Our destination today is the hero's relay base.

While watching the girls' peerlessness, I think hard about what kind of Japanese sweets should I serve to commemorate our reunion with the hero.

15-11. Phantasmal Labyrinth (3)

*

Satou's here. Dungeons that appear in games are generally made clearable. No matter which nightmarish difficulty you choose, someone from the development staff will always make sure to adjust it so that you can finish it until the end. However, the real life dungeon doesn't seem to be like so....



"Isn't it getting hotter?"

"I can use Air Conditioner magic if you want?"

"Don't~?"

"Noticing labyrinth's abnormality would be harder so don't nanodesu."

I replied Arisa's grumble like so, but Tama and Pochi raised such objections.

Their remarks are proofs that they're more experienced in exploring labyrinths than me.

While feeling a bit proud, I pat the two heads, saying "You're right."

"Nihehe~?"

"It's been awhile since Master patted Pochi nanodesu."

Was that so?

"Master, I also wish for magic power refill later so I tell."

"Sure thing."

When I made a promise to Nana without thinking, Arisa's eyes shined.

"Sexual harassment-type of requests are forbidden."

"No way~"

Getting shot down by me prematurely, Arisa pretends to break down crying.

"Master, we arrived at an open space, so I report."

"It looks like a cylinder isn't it."

"I wonder if the red thing on the floor of this large room is lava?"

Lulu and Liza followed up after Nana.

There's a large cylindrical room with diameter of around 100 meters at the end of the passage, and there's a narrow passage along the wall that goes spiraling below.

Just as Liza's said, the floor at the bottom is filled with bubbling lava and noxious gas.

There are several tunnels along the passage, it seems they connect to the labyrinth's middle layer.

The tunnel closest to the lava is connected to the hero's relay base--the goods depot.

"Ah, he fell."

About at the same time Arisa muttered, Liza threw a steel spear.

One of adventurers had lost his footing and fell headlong toward the lava--or rather, he was going to.

He's dangling on the wall, stitched on the spear thrown by Liza.

Of course, the spear didn't pierce through his body but his sturdy fireproof mantle.

The companions of the adventurer shouted from afar at us to thank you.

After seeing off the adventurers who went into a tunnel, we continue on the passage.

Before long we found ourselves before an impasse.

Stepping stones are floating in mid-air, you'll need to jump over them like in an action game.

"Stop!"

Tama uses this kind of tone when she finds a trap.

Tama who opens her eyes wide is staring at the floating stones seriously.

"Illusion~?"

She points at one of them with her usual tone.

Looks like she found an illusion among the stepping stones.

"That looks to be the case. And this one will rotate and drop you down below if you step on it."

Another stone with a different kind of trap is located right beside it. The Dungeon Master of this place seems to be a nasty one.



"How long till the relay base?"

I open the map to answer Arisa's question.

--This is?!

"Let's hurry! Everyone prepare to teleport!"

"Understood!"

I waited only a breath after Liza's answer before teleporting us away. There's a clearly different kind of red flowing on the slanting passage with lava.

"Over there~?"

Faster than Tama pointing her finger, I moved with Ground Shrink to the place where there were sounds of weapons clashing.

"Damn, damn damn, why isn't the Mithril sword working!"

"Kekekekeh, although it'll be different with the lowly Blood Stalker, such attacks won't work on true vampires the followers of darkness--"

I cut the vampire who's saying some stupid thing in two with the Mithril-made Fairy Sword.

Vampire is a troublesome race that can immediately revive even after they're turned into ashes, but that's the more reason I can attack them without reservation.

I ignore the Blood Bead and Magic Cores drop item on the ground and prioritize healing the man.

"Oy, are you still alive? Drink this magic potion."

"Stop, it's already too late. My blood has been sucked by the vampire earlier. I'm already losing my self and wanting blood."

The man spun words while gasping.

According to the AR reading beside him, his statement is true.

"--Item Box, open."

A black square appeared beside him.

"There's supply for hero-sama inside....Take out as much as possible and deliver them to hero-sama...."

I'm moving my hands while hearing him.

He--no, they seem to be the transport troops tasked to carry goods to the hero's relay base.

They're not only composed of Saga Empire's people, it seems there are also adventures from Dejima Island.

"Everyone else in the hero transport troops has died. The items inside Item Box will disappear when I die. While I'm resisting the power of darkness, quickly--"

"It's alright, leave it to me."

I powerfully assure him, the man endures the pain while gritting his teeth.

Soon enough, I dispelled all the miasma, and the man's state changed to normal person after I used the highest ranked magic to recover status abnormality.

For me who is able to dispel demon lord's curse, there's no way that I cannot cancel infection from a mere vampire who isn't even a True Ancestor.

The member of transport troops who has been healed falls unconscious. He probably has lost too much blood from getting sucked by the vampire. I'll give him blood-forming medicine once he wakes up.

"Uwahh, there's blood all over the place..."

"Yeah, it seems a vampire appeared here."

The girls who have caught up frown at the disastrous scene.

"Tama and Pochi, gather the ashes on the ground and put it inside this jar."

"Aye, dustpan~?"

"Time to display Pochi's exquisite skill with broom nodesu!"

Rustle-rustle, the two gather the ashes that was originally a vampire into the jar.

The magic core among the ashes is needed for the vampire to revive so I'll put it in a different location than the other magic cores.

I'm going to leave the punishment of this vampire to the [True Ancestor] Ban in the labyrinth's lower layer.

He will no doubt give the appropriate punishment to a vampire.

I start the next high priority work.

"Satou?"

"Just look."

After telling Mia who looked puzzled, I concentrate on the opposite side of the space.

I thrust my hand at the slightly wavering space.

--There's a reaction.

I forcefully expanded it just like that and then the goods that were inside it fell down.

"W-wait, don't tell me."

I affirm the surprised Arisa.

I interfered with the Item Boxes whose users had died from outside and took out the contents.

"....Geez, you're absurd like always."

Arisa sighed, looking astounded.

"Arisa can do it too right?"

"It may be possible if I have several bottles of high-ranked magic recovery potion, and a mid-level space magician assistant for measuring the position of the space. "

--So it's not like she can't do it.

In my case, it's just that I don't need the prior preparation is all.



Now then, next we'll be heading toward the relay base but....

"--Annihilated?"

I affirm Liza.

"Yes, they were caught in a surprise attack by some strong monsters and annihilated."

I found the survivor earlier after seeing that the relay base was annihilated and searched the circumference for any survivor.

Two monsters are lurking at the place where the relay base was, a Mimic Salamander that has [Mimic] race-specific skill, and an Illusion Golem

whose race-specific ability is [Optical Camouflage].

Both of them are level 50, it seems they hide their bodies when there's no enemies.

Worse, a level 60 Lava Golem is lurking on the floor above the relay base. Since the ceiling is thin, it's probably going to drop down when the hero is fighting against the two monsters.

"Now then, what should we do--"

I'd like to hand over the revenge battle to the hero, but it's probably going to be tough for them who have been exhausted from the battle with the demon lord to fight the three monsters.

I don't think the hero himself would lose, but his followers and fellow travelers won't get out of it without any victim.

I evacuate the sole survivor to the [Sub-space] that's been copied from the Phantasmal Labyrinth and head to the destroyed relay base.

"Over there and there, monsters~?"

"Not yet, wait a bit okay."

"Aye."

Tama was going to dispose of them quickly, but even though the two level 50 monsters are weaker than her, their HPs are too high, so I refrained her.

I think Tama can win against them alone, but it would take time and destroy the relay base further.

"First, let's bring them to a place that's easy to fight in."

I execute the second [Another World] today, and create a sub-space for battle.

"It's like the mysterious magic space that often appears in Tokusatsu isn't it?"

Without minding Arisa's remark which had various meaning mixed in, we pull the three monsters into the sub-space I've created.

--BUWARETWEEEEERYWA. <TLN: Likely from "bareteru", literally means "exposed.">

--MVA.

The Mimic Salamander that was mimicking as a huge rock and the Illusion Golem that was being transparent showed themselves up.

"Guess I'll call the one above too."

It'll be troubling if it enters the battle later, so I destroy the ceiling with the Short Stun magic.

--MUWAGUUUUEMVA.

While roaring incomprehensibly, the level 60 Lava Golem fell down with the ceiling splinters.

It's scattering sparks around, so it looks quite showy.

"Master, your order please."

Liza who's concealing quiet fighting spirit asks.

The other girls are also waiting for my reply.

"Defeat them--you can go at full power."

"Understood."

We're in the center of the sub-space created by [Another World] so there should be no problem even if the girls go at full power. Probably.

"Mia, create the appropriate artificial spirit."

"Nn, Water Dragon (Leviathan) ■■--."

Per Liza's instruction, Mia spoke the artificial spirit's name and began to chant.

"Nana, take care of the enemy in the middle. Keep them at bay until the other vanguards join."

"In agreement with Liza's instruction, so I inform. Equipment Installation."

When Nana muttered so, the artificial magic equipment (Raka Clone) in the form of a choker opened an entrance to sub-space behind her with space magic [Garage].

Transparent [Magic Hands] that extend from it strip off Nana's equipment and install the new golden armor.

The transformation scene looks similar to the ones in various media, but the transformation time is too long compared to ones in fiction.

I won't ask for it to be one millisecond long, I just want it to be one second at least.

Nana who's been equipped with the golden armor activates the 『Castle』 mode and takes up defensive position with the great shield ready.

The girls who saw Nana's equipment change begin to change theirs similarly.

The enemies are coming to attack of course, but they're trapped in Arisa's space magic [Labyrinth] and can't get close.

"Lulu, remain on stand-by and prepare to shoot anytime. Arisa, please command the support and rearguard appropriately."

"Yes, I understand."

"Okay, leave it to me."

Behind Lulu and Arisa, Tama and Pochi are waiting Liza's instruction with impatient faces.

Liza probably leaves them for the last since no doubt these girls are going to jump out the moment they've been given the order.

"Pochi, overrun the enemy on the right. Tama, assist Pochi."

"Roger, nanodesu."

"Aye aye sir~?"

The two who took shutan pose just for having their turns took Liza's instruction.

"Physical Reinforcement."

"Magic Circulation and Accelerated Thought too naanodesu!"

Tama and Pochi activate their own support skills.

Arisa and Nana put buff-type skills on all the vanguards.

"Right on mark~?"

"Pochi wants Master's reinforcement magic too nodesu."

"Sure, 『Divine Light Blade』 and 『Divine Light Shield』."

Losing to Pochi's cute request, I used the advanced force magic I learned from Hikaru on her.

The names sound like they're of Light magic, it's confusing.

"Overflowing with power~?"

"Fully ready now nanodesu."

"Then I'll release the [Labyrinth] okay."

"Aye."

"Yes, nanodesu."

The girls replied back Arisa powerfully.

"Raka-san, we're going too!"

『Umu, I'll be supporting to the best of my ability.』

I grab the nape of Lady Karina who was going to rush out with Liza and the others.

"You can't Karina-sama. Let's watch them here with me."

It's dangerous for Lady Karina to be near Liza and the others when they're serious.

I think it should be fine with Raka's protection, but I can't guarantee her safety in case she's hit by Liza's dragon spear or Pochi's holy sword.

"I-I also want to fight together desuwa!"

"It's fine."

I'm thinking of letting her have enough battles to let the new name of her technique instilled in her heart.

We have to think the new name for the technique before that though.

"I'll let you fight all you want later."

When I tell her that with a smile, for some reason Lady Karina's face becomes blue and she begins to tremble violently.

Perhaps it's because I made her work a bit too much during the training to learn [Magic Power Operation] back then.



"Labyrinth, release."

"There's no lost child~ so I coerce."

"Tou, nanodesu!"

The moment Arisa released her magic, Nana said some questionable provocative words, Pochi rushed out using Flickering Movement while drawing her sword.

The Illusion Golem intercepts Pochi by swinging its fist at her.

"Shadow Bind~?"

Tama threw kunai at the Illusion Golem's shadow, stopping its movement with Ninjutsu.

"Blue Fang Arc Moon Slash, nanodesu."

Pochi's holy sword draws an arc, cutting the Illusion Golem from below to above.

--Boom.

Pochi kicked the ground at the same time her sword touched the golem, and the golem got thrown up with enough force like it's going to be cut in two.

The holy sword drawing blue light sharply cuts the golem's body.

--Boom boom.

With the second jump, Pochi jumped up 10 meter high, and the holy sword came out of the golem's shoulder.

The golem's enormous HP has been decreased to 40%.

"Pochi, niice~?"

"Not yet, nanodesu!"

Pochi holds her knee and spins a bit.

"Blue Fang Rupturing Strike."

--Bang.

Kicking the air, Pochi pierced the golem like a cannonball.
The golem's HP decreased even further to 30%.

I'm going to overlook the fact that Pochi's body has been buried in the ground due to her over-enthusiasm.

The golem's splinters and dust are greatly scattered at the surrounding, Arisa and Mia who are hiding behind Lulu complain.
Even my Attentive Ears couldn't hear them since it was covered by the roaring sound though.

The golem raises its stout arm at Pochi who's stopped moving for revenge.
The Shadow Binding seems to have been removed by Pochi's attack earlier.

"Don't worry be happy~?"

Tama who's cloned herself before I knew it surrounds the golem with magic swords shining red.

"Crimson Fang Furious Hundred Slash, nyan."

More than a hundred slashes mercilessly assault the golem.
The golem's HP decreases slightly every time a red light flashes.

Her offensive power is lower compared to Pochi's, but the torrent of slashes that slip through the golem's defense break its hand, gouge its stomach, and drill its knee.

--MVAMMMMVVVVAAA.

Voice tinged with fear greater than when it was facing off against Pochi echoed, in the end, the golem became a mountain of crumbling wreckage.

"You did well you two. The next enemy is of equal strength. Give it your all."

Liza asked the two who had finished their battle for the last battle.

The Mimic Lizard that was fighting with Liza was quickly defeated by 16 stabs of Liza's Dragon Spear during Pochi's first attack earlier.

Please use your finisher at least.

I watched over the girls' peerlessness while thinking like that, and then we went back to the original labyrinth.

Because Hero Hayato is arriving at the relay base.

15-12. Hero in the Labyrinth

*

Satou's here. In games, there is a technique to throw off the rhythm of players who have grown accustomed to the same enemies appearing. by revealing an unexpected enemy The super popular Zombie Hazard game uses it effectively.



"Then I'll be going ahead."

"Un, say hello to Hayato for me okay."

I bring only Lady Karina with me into the labyrinth outside of the [Sub-space].

Arisa and the others are going to join us once they've fixed up their equipment.

They're probably going to rest a bit since there's a light bath set and some light meals on the table.

"Oops, enemies."

During our absence, a large amount of doppelgangers have occupied the relay base.

Thoroughly enough, they're acting as [fallen friends with serious injury] in order to lure the hero to approach them defenselessly.

"E-enemies desuno? Raka-san--"

『--Karina-dono, pay attention to the surroundings in alert. Unfortunately, my enemy search function cannot find any sign of the enemy. However, if Satou-dono has said so, then there must be enemies nearby.』

Raka advised Lady Karina who was shaken.

It'll be troublesome if we meet the hero in battle so I exterminate them all at once with Remote Arrows.

I rain down the Remote Arrows on the doppelgangers pretending to be corpses in front of us, turning them into milk-white liquid.

--Kya"

The surprised lady Karina hugs my arm.

Seeing people and their clothes melting probably feels bad even though she's seen it before.

"It's all right Karina-sama. The enemies have all been disposed of just now."

Lady Karina looks relieved, but now her eyes are spinning after noticing the fact that she's hugging me.

The impregnable fortress pair, Arisa and Mia aren't here, so I decide to enjoy the situation for a while.



"Hero-sama! The relay base has suffered great damage!"

"Look for survivors! There might be monsters lurking, so always have someone with magic probe equipment with you!"

I could hear the hero's voice on the other side of the hall, they can't see us due to an obstruction.

I pull Lady Karina by hand toward the hero and his party.

There are pillars of stones and burnt wreckages in the center of the hall so the view here is bad.

"Hero-sama! There are people on top of the cliff."

"That's, Satou?"

A knight wearing black armor pointed at us and shouted, a woman wearing silver armor muttered my name quizzically.

The girl with the silver straight hair is Lady Ringrande, the [Sky-tearing Witch], one of the hero's follower. She's the big sister of Sera the [Oracle Miko] who's in my solitary island palace, the daughter of the duke and also a bit of a siscon.

I waved my hands at her and jumped down the cliff.

Lady Karina followed while holding down her fluttering skirt.

"Why is Satou in this place...."

Wariness floated in Lady Ringrande's eyes, she puts her dominant hand on her sword's grip.

When we've come close enough to have a conversation, I open my mouth to greet them.

"Good day, Ringrande-sama, for this occasion--"

"Hero-sama, over here!"

While I was saying my condolence, a black knight appeared, together with Hero Hayato.

"Satou--"

His macho handsome face looks exhausted due to the long-term labyrinth exploration and his battles with the demon lord.

His blue armor is also dented and dirtied, the brilliance of [Hero] that I

saw back then has lost its luster.

"I-it's hero Hayato-sama in flesh desuwa."

『Karina-dono, I do not mind if you are delighted, but do not let your guard down.』

Lady Karina reacts like a fangirl when she sees the hero, it's probably because the education she's gotten from Earl Muno the hero researcher since childhood.

While feeling heartwarming looking at her, I turn back to the hero.

"Hayato-sama, please excuse me for my long silence."

My eyes met the hero's while saying that with a smile.

His eyes somehow remind me of the time when I was in a development death march.

They remind me too much of eyes which resent everything in the world, wanting sleep, peace, and liberation from work.

I should have come to help him sooner.

I repent the fact that I had left the hero alone in my mind.

"--It's you this time huh."

The laugh which doesn't suit him at all bothers me.

"Hayato-sama, what's the matter?"

"Take this, Satou!"

The hero drew the holy sword Arondight and swung it.

"<<Shining Blade>>."

The hero's technique which I haven't seen for a long time is faster than before.

I evade the blue light extending from the blade.

"Kyaa, desuwa."

『Gununu, as expected of hero's technique.』

Lady Karina and Raka who seemed to have taken the after-wave of the attack screamed.

Lady Karina seems suspiciously happy about it.

It's hard to understand, but as a hero fan, is she glad for taking the attack with her body?

Still the technique's focus is worse than I expected.

The after-wave of the technique he showed me back then would have not gone toward Lady Karina.

"Shining Strike Rush."

With the help of Flickering Movement, hero Hayato appeared before me. The holy sword Arondight in his hand releases striking blue light.

"Oops, that's dangerous."

He wasn't aiming at my heart or other vital parts, but the sword strikes were going to pierce my lung and shoulder so I inadvertently evaded.

"Hmph, evading my blow like that, you damn impostor!"

"It's the real one you know?"

"No impostor would admit being one."

--Well, that's true.

They were probably attacked by doppelgangers many times before reaching here.

I keep the hero company to release his stress for a while, and when he had begun to run out of breath, I hurled him away.

The hero fixed his posture mid-air and landed on the ground.

"You can see that I'm the real one if you just appraise me you know?"

"Guess I have to...."

I'm intrigued as to why he didn't appraise me from the beginning, but doing that should prove my innocence now at least.

"Rin, be on guard with drawn sword."

"Y-yes."

Lady Ringrande and the black knights are encircling with drawn swords, and then the other hero's followers showed up behind while being supported by the black knights.

The 21th princess of Saga Empire with luxurious blond hair, Maryest Saga the [Witch] and the big breasted heartwarming-type, Miss Loreiya, a priestess of Parion Temple.

The last one, Seina the hero's scout is in the back with serious injury. It seems Seina is guarded by the black knights of Saga Empire and red-armored knights dispatched by the weasel crown prince.

The scout-type adventurers whom they seemed to have recruited in Dejima Island are continuing their search in the hall and the surroundings.

There's no one who looks like the engineer dispatched by Weasel Empire. They probably only showed up in the beginning and then left the rest to the red knights, never actually entering the labyrinth.

--He's unmistakably the real Satou Pendragon."

The hero declared so after staring at me for around 30 seconds.

"I'm sorry, Satou."

I stopped the hero who was going to apologize with dogeza and asked why he suddenly attacked without appraising first.

"We were attacked by doppelgangers who took forms of Rusus and the others before getting here."

"After we dealt with them, we saw bodies of the relay base members in the passage, and when we checked them some directional antipersonnel mines (Claymores) exploded, seriously injuring Seina and the others."

"After that the doppelgangers persistently attacked us many times by posing as our acquaintances."

I see, so Hero's suspicion was nurtured in order to set up me and hero to crush each other....

"Furthermore, I need at least 10 seconds to see through the doppelganger's identity. It picks up fake information if I only glance lightly."

I see, so there's such a trap too.

My AR reading showed both [Human] and [Doppelganger] so it didn't trouble me, but if that's the case with him then I can understand.

But then, he can just appraise for 10 seconds right?

That question was answered by what the hero says next.

"Moreover, a guy who shouldn't have been here was accompanied by a woman while not even holding a sword nor a wand, that was way too suspicious."

I forgot that I've stored the fairy sword that's usually on my waist in my storage since it was dirtied when I dealt with the vampire.
Magic and magic edge are enough to take care of common monsters after all.

"I'm sorry."

I honestly apologize to the hero.

"I came here with my companions so I had left all the battles for them to take care of."

Next, I asked Lady Karina to demonstrate her rock-crushing fist and Raka's protection.

"Both of you are level 50 huh. You really worked hard."

I felt slightly guilty to hear the hero said that, but Lady Karina behind me was overwhelmed and turned red.



"Master~?"

"Pochi can smell Master's smell over there nodesu."

I could hear Tama and Pochi's voices, so I call them aloud.

I use the [Magic Hand] to receive the girls who waved and jumped down the top of cliff.

The vanguards landed on their own just fine.

"My honey!"

"Hayato-sama, excuse me for my unsightly appearance."

Arisa coped with the hero's gleeful smile with formal graceful tone and behavior.

Tama and Pochi put their hands on Arisa's forehead in panic, going, "Fever~?", "Oh no nanodesu."

Liza who's read the atmosphere picks up the two away.

"Bringing children to this place?"

"They must be disposable slaves."

I heard such conversations from the black knights.

"--Satou."

Hero nonchalantly glanced at Liza and Tama, and then opened his eyes wide.

"Don't tell me, you... used Fiend Drug?"

"No?"

What's this suddenly?

Rather, your face is too close.

"Then why are some of these girls' level at 62?"

The hero vigorously swung his arm and asked passionately.

It seems that Arisa has put the [Thief God Harness] which she always wears on Liza.

Although, in this situation, I don't think he would react differently even if he saw Pochi's and Liza's titles.

"Trained~?"

"Pochi worked really really hard nodesu!"

"It's all thanks to Master's wonderful equipment and support."

The beastkin girls answered in my behalf.

"We were just continuously battling monsters almost to the point of making them go extinct in Selbira Labyrinth and destroyed a monster domain."

I didn't say anything about the Blue Territory since Saga Empire's black knights and Weasel Empire's red knights are here.

After pondering for a while, the hero stares at me with an earnest look.

"Satou, I have a favor to ask."

"Yes, if it's within my power--"

Thus, us team [Pendragon] undertakes the duty to subjugate the demon lord together with hero Hayato's party.

Of course, I'm fully planning to do things behind-the-scenes.

15-Intermission: Hero's Break

*

"N-no way! It's curry riceeeeeeee!"

The moment the hero saw the curry set lined up on the table, he stood up and shouted out loud.

He vigorously turned around toward me, so I nodded and told him, "It's the real thing."

We're in the annex of the inn reserved for the hero so there's no problem, but I wish he turns down the voice a bit.

"Let's eat!"

The hero put the spoon with curry rice into his mouth while choking full with tears of gratitude.

He's too overenthusiastic I was afraid that he'd scatter the curry rice everywhere but it appears to be an imaginary fear.

"So goooooooooooooooooooooood"

The hero shouted once and then he gulped down the curry rice sloppily.

"Curry really is a drink."

"No no, that's wrong."

I objected Arisa's remark, and offered the dishes to the hero's followers.

"The stew has some peculiar smell doesn't it?"

"It's spicy, but tasty y'know."

"I'm not good with spicy things."

"Ara? Even though it's this good."

Miss Wiyaryi the longearkin (booch) archer and Rusus the tiger ear-kin were happily eating the curry, but Fifi the wolf ear-kin sniffed the scent and backed away from the plate.

Loreiya the priestess is elegantly eating the curry while combing her hair upward.

"Give it to me if you're not eating them."

The hero moved Fifi aside and quickly snatched her plate.

Wait now, stop that, you can have seconds all you want.

"Ah, so this is the legendary curry!"

"It's the phantom dish of which the founder hero sought all his life."

Sera's big sister, Lady Ringrande the [Sky-tearing Witch] and Princess Maryest the [Witch] are trembling from being deeply moved, they don't seem to be able to put the curry on the spoon.

Come to think of it, Hikaru and Lady Karina also reacted similarly when I served them curry.

"Fifi-san, please try this one if you don't like spicy food."

"Oh, that smells nice."

When I offered her a normal omelette rice, Fifi's wolf ears twitch and then she peeks at the plate.

"Hee? An egg dish? It looks like the omelette in Saga Empire."

"Omelette! I-is this red sauce carrot?"

Seina the scout and Nono the secretary who were eating the curry behind the hero came and peered at Fifi's plate from both sides with great speed.

"T-this is mine!"

Fifi, worried about the two's enthusiasm, hides the omelette rice like she's hugging it.

"Fifi, let me have a bite."

"I want to eat it too!"

Nono and Seina pestered Fifi.

"I can't trust your 'a bite'"

"How rude! Unlike Seina, my mouthful is cute."

"Hey, mine is cute too!"

"Thank you for waiting~?"

"Additional dishes nanodesu."

I wanted to see the three's bargaining a bit more, but since Tama and Pochi showed bringing additional dishes, I decided to put an end to the dispute.

"It seems more omelette rice have come, would you two like to taste it?"

"Yay!"

"Sir Pendragon is a bully."

Seina immediately got into the omellete rice, Nono put the omellette rice into his mouth while glaring at me.

"It's not, carrot? What sauce is this?"

"Toumatoo~?"

"Ketchup nanodesu!"

"Tomato ketchup sauce is it?"

Nono combined Tama's strangely good pronunciation and Pochi's Japanese pronunciation together.

"The sauce is ketchup made from tomato. It's a product from Ringrande-sama's hometown, Oyugock Dukedom."

Lady Ringrande reacted to my explanation.

"Satou? I've never seen that sauce though?"

"Nn, Satou."

"Master developed it, so I refer."

"Hee, as one would expect from the 『Miracle Chef』."

Explained by Mia and Nana, Lady Ringrande called me with a nostalgic title.

Then, Lulu and Liza come into the room pushing a trolley with a big sukiyaki pot on it.

"Sorry to keep you waiting. This is Oumi beef sukiyaki."

"Sukiyaki!"

The hero who had asked for his fifth helping turned toward Lulu while having his yellowed mouth wiped by Priestess Loreiya.

"Yes, it's a dish from Hero-sama's country."

Lulu doesn't act differently even though the other party is the hero. She probably thinks people who eat her dishes with relish are the same as our girls.

"Would you like to have raw eggs?"

"Ou, I do!"

On the contrary Liza who's acting unusually tense handed a plate with raw eggs.

I'm praying that her trembling hands aren't because of warrior's

excitement.

"Me-meat."

"Meat nanodesu. But Pochi has to wait since right now it's 『Wait』 nodesu."

Tama and Pochi are staring at the beef inside sukiyaki while drooling.

--Huh? I never ordered them as such though?

"I thought of letting Hayato and the others to eat first."

"You did huh. However, there's no need to worry, I've prepared enough for us all."

It seems Arisa is the culprit.

This time, I obtained the meat by imitating Weasel Empire way to increase meat production.

Since I harvested the transformation of Oumi cow when it reached level 50, the <<Great Mad Buffalo>>, I was able to get more than 100 ton beef.

It doesn't taste as good as the highest grade Oumi beef, but it should not taste that different for the part used in Suki-yaki.

"I've also asked Lulu to make another dish, it should be here soon I think?"

As if matching Arisa's words, brownie maids open the door and carry hamburger steaks and karaage inside.

"Hamburgu~?"

"It is the time for the hamburger steak sensei to appear nanodesu!"

Tama and Pochi turn their, "Can I eat it?", faces at me so I nod to give them the permission.

"Wa~y?"

"Pochi's battle has just begun nanodesu!"

Not only Tama and Pochi, the other girls also begin to eat.

"Is that good?"

"Of coursee~?"

"Gimme one too."

"Of course nanodesu! Hamburg-sensei is big hearted nodesuyo!"

Fifi and Rusus who had finished eating omelette rice and curry joined the subjugation quest for the mountain of hamburg steaks.

It seems the yakitori battlefield which Liza is challenging are joined by Miss Wiyaryi and Miss Loreiya who has secured a bottle of Dragon Spring Liquor.

While watching the peaceful exchange of the girls and hero's followers, I accept a wine cup that Lady Ringrande offered.

It seems there's Saga Empire whiskey inside.

"Satou, thank you. I didn't think that Hayato would be able to laugh that cheerfully until we defeated the demon lord."

"Yes, the atmosphere of torment around him has disappeared neatly. You're the best reinforcement we can ever hope."

I replied Lady Ringrande and Maryest who were awfully flattering with, "It's an honor", toasted and drank the whiskey.

--Oops.

I immediately regret once I drank it.

I should have tasted it more.

"This is a nice whiskey."

"Yes, it's a special whiskey bestowed with the name 『Saga』 that can only be drunk by the imperial family."

"Is it alright to give such a precious whiskey to me?"

"Yes, it's nothing compared to the Dragon Spring Liquor which Loreiya monopolizes."

It's true that you can't get ahold of Dragon Spring Liquor no matter how much money you throw.

"I also have various others--"

Saying that, I took out three small bottles with different kinds of Dragon Spring Liquor inside.

In addition to the Ancient Dragon's and the Black Dragon's liquor, there's also one created with my Dragon Language Magic.

"I smelled some delicious liquor."

Soft mass and sexy drunk voice descend upon my back.

When I turn around, there's Miss Loreiya with flushed face at close proximity.

Her arms are reaching the liquor bottles over my shoulders so my back feels really blissful.

"Loreiya, calm down a bit."

"Look, Satou is troubled."

Princess Maryest reproved, Lady Ringrande pulled my hand to save me from Miss Loreiya's assault.

"Ara?"

"Kyaa."

Perhaps it's a blessing from Lucky Lewd God, I ended up diving into Lady Ringrande's lap together with Miss Loreiya.

Of course it was possible for me to evade it with all my might, but this time I decided to respect the god's will and enjoyed the softness. The impregnable fortress pair is busy treating the hero after all.



Now then, right at this time the hero is--.

"So many loli maids?! I-Is this heaven!"

Staring at the brownie maids with the best smile he's ever had, choke full of tears of gratitude.

I think his reaction is even greater than the time with the curry, but pointing that out would be boorish of me.

"Hero-sama."

"P-Princess Arisa, this is a misunderstanding."

The hero was shaken by Arisa's word.

After this, as to what he would do after knowing that the loli maids are [Legal Loli], there is no way of knowing that for I am not a god.

I'm certain that his soul is surely the embodiment of [YES! Lolita, NO! Touch.]



Thus the night grows late, and the party transitions to drinking time, I let the girls to go back to their room and switch to adult social time.

"Satou, you think we can win?"

"I have no doubt that Hayato-sama will win."

Tomorrow is going to be the end of the demon lord, so I'll make him win no matter what.

Moreover, judging from the demon lord's level, he should have been able to win easily if there was no intervention from the [Dungeon Master].

"That so! I feel like I will certainly win when you said so!"

"Yes, that's what it means to be the 『Hero of Saga Empire』."

"Yea, damn right!"

The hero's cheerful laughter echoes in the party hall, his friends who see him like that seem to have relaxed too.

Subjugating the demon lord should be easy now.

15-13. Hero in the Labyrinth (2)

*

Satou's here. There was a movie where the characters became small and had an adventure inside someone's body. I found it absurd even with my child's mind, but nevertheless, I still remember intently watching it until the end. I've forgotten the title, but I will surely watch it if they remake the movie.



"Satou, this artifact 『Demon Lord's Pointer』 is really awesome."

The hero who checked the effect of the magic tool I gave him was surprised.

Apparently the Magic Prober that the Weasel Empire loaned is merely an item that detects distribution of miasma, not an item that can directly point to the demon lord.

"Yes, I found it inside a certain ruin and thought that it would be useful for Hayato-sama, so I brought it here."

The [Demon Lord Compass] that the hero is holding looks like a three-dimensional compass. It's a diamond sphere with hollowed inside and an orichalcum needle in the center.

Of course, it goes without saying that the thing is my creation, so the story behind it is so random.

I made this item before we arrived at Dejima Island, it can receive information from my map and points at the passages that go to the demon lord.

The item receives the transmission wave from neighboring sub-space connected to it, so common magic neutralizer and magic power restriction type of traps should not be able to hinder it.

"Are these small children really stronger than us?"

"Doesn't look like it~"

Rusus and Fifi who have made a comeback at the hero party look like they don't approve of it.

"Tama strong~?"

"Pochi is also very strong nodesu."

"You two don't be conceited."

"Nn, modesty."

Liza and Mia rebuked Tama and Pochi who have been excited since yesterday.

"Is that a magic gun? Is it true that it's better than a bow?"

Miss Wiyaryi is intriguingly looking at the rifle-shaped magic gun that Lulu is holding.

Today Lulu is equipped with the lovely floating shields extend version and a magic gun.

I've told them that these floating shields are something provided by Echigoya Firm, and the support members of hero Hayato, the black knights have also been equipped with them.

Since the black knights usually suffer the greatest loss every time, Loreiya and other priests who are parts of recovery team thanked me together with the black knights.

Further, the red knights are not participating this time since they received the order left behind by the crown prince to stand by.

"Yes, probably."

"Probably?"

"I think the bow Master shoots is even stronger than this."

"Fumu, so it's like that...."

Putting aside the golden armor's options; the Floating Forts and the Accelerated Cannon, the rifle-type magic gun that Lulu holds is only 2-3 times stronger than a Fire Wand.

It's only about half as strong as the military-use Magic Cannon.

"Satou, is it really alright to give us this many 『Magic Bags』?"

"Not only that, you also gave us mid and high magic potions, and even precious Elixirs and Blood Beads."

"Yes, I've brought them for Hayato-sama's sake after all."

Lady Ringrande and Princess Maryest thanked me for the items.

Both of them look like they'd die when I reunited with them back then, but they look quite healthy now after having enough rest.

"Ain't it fine, it's a tribute from Rin's brother-in-law, no need to hesitate."

"I haven't acknowledged the marriage with Sera okay."

Lady Ringrande reacted to the scout Seina's words.

I am living with Sera, but we're not in such a relationship.

"Really?"

"Yes, it's just a misunderstanding, my relationship with your little sister Sera-sama is--right, I guess the most applicable term would be 'intimate friends'"

When I replied so, Seina put her hand on her chin and began to think about something.

"Then we have to thank you for the elixirs. I belong to hero so I can't give myself to you, but ya can snatch peerage and money from Saga Empire."

I'm intrigued by the snatching thing, but I myself am more interested in touring the Hero Summoning Magic Circle than materialistic things, so I tell them as such.

"I need not either. If I may ask the impossible, I'd be glad to be given the permission to see the Hero Summoning Magic Circle together with Earl Muno."

They'd be suspicious of me "What for", if I went by myself, but there's no doubt that they'll think of me as a young noble who likes his master if I bring up Earl Muno who's famous for liking hero into this.
Earl Muno must be happy with it too.

"I can ask that much from His Majesty the emperor."

"Are you sure Mary?"

"Yes, having been blessed by Parion-sama, Hero Summoning Magic Circle cannot be destroyed by any normal mean."

Is it like indestructible object that often appear in games?

Now that the princess has made her promise, visiting Saga Empire first might be a good idea if I can't meet the Weasel Empire's emperor after this fight is over.



"Satou, don't die."

"Yes, I'll be praying for Hayato-sama's victory as well."

"Protect Princess Arisa by all cost."

"Yes, I promise."

After arriving at the place where the relay base was located at, Hero and I are going separate ways.

We're not in dispute, the hero party is going to where the demon lord is while we're going to the lowest layer to subjugate the mid-boss-like guardian.

In one of the hero's past battles, the moment they entered the room where the Dungeon Core was located, the demon lord was replaced by the guardian and the Dungeon Core was also changed into Fake Core.

It's quite an enigmatic feature, but according to Arisa, it seems to be an extremely common thing a dungeon master has in the web novel world.

We're in charge of destroying the Fake Core since it doesn't seem like they can be replaced if we destroy them all.

"Princess Arisa, once this fight is over--"

"You can't, Hero-sama."

Arisa stopped the hero who was going to raise a death flag by putting her hand on his mouth.

He seemed like he still had something to say, but it looked like he thought it'd be bad to do that so he didn't say anything more.

"Then, see ya."

"Yes, please be careful."

"Hayato-sama, may the fortune be with you."

After saying that, Arisa kissed the hero's cheek and then the hero's followers poked fun on the hero who was unusually confused. They're probably jealous.

Further, Lady Karina's anxiety was in full display, she couldn't say anything to encourage the hero no matter how hard I tried to push her.

Would have been nice if this was the driving force for her to heal her stranger's anxiety.

"Well then, shall we be going too."

We start to move to the lowest layer where the guardians are once the hero and his party disappeared from our view.

They seemed to be under the impression that there were only one Fake Core, but according to the map, there are seven fake cores and guardians. Destroying them one by one will be troublesome, but it should be over fast if I just use Teleport Gate magic.

"Hey hey, let's quickly defeat the guardians and finish it."

Arisa talked while we were walking.

"Can we go and help defeat the demon lord?"

"Of course, that's what I'm planning to do."

I'm going to deal with the mysterious [Dungeon Master] who collaborated with the demon lord.

Moreover, if the demon lord can be reasoned with, I'll implant the [God's Fragment] to a different monster and let the hero defeat that impromptu demon lord to make him become the [True Hero].
I don't think it'll go that conveniently well though.



"So there is not only one guardian."

"Master, there are nine bodies so I report."

"Hey, are they the real ones?"

"Yes, they are. That's why, don't make a move okay."

I instruct the girls to stay back, and head to where the guardians are alone.

"Good evening Liedill-sama, what a coincidence for us to meet in such a place."

"Satou, defeat me with all your might. I'll resist the control with all my power to return the last debt"

AR reading, state [Ruled: Dungeon Master] is shown beside her who's sweating a lot from her forehead.

The nine people behind her are probably her attendants.

The attendants are under Ruled state like her.

I want to know how they got under the control of the Dungeon Master, so I swiftly leap to under their busts and make them fall unconsciousness with light attacks.

"What should I say, that's a really blunt attack."

"Really?"

I lightly answered Arisa's muttering and released them from the control with [Magic Break].

It's easy compared to the demon lord's curse that isn't displayed on AR reading.

Now then, I'll check out what has happened.

Not by interrogation which is unreliable, I'm going to check the memory by using the forbidden spell of soul magic, [Soul Intrude].

I can also use the forbidden spell of mind magic, [Psycho Dive], but this one has a high probably of crippling the recipient, so I'm going with the former.

The former is a dangerous magic that can induce impairment if the user tries to read deep memory but there should be no danger of that here since I'm just going to see the recent battles. I can just cut the connection if it looks dangerous.

"Fumu, it doesn't feel that different from the advanced soul magic 『Perfect Possession』 huh."

"What a surprising magic like always."

Arisa was surprised when I talked with Lady Liedill's mouth. I also feel odd talking with a high-pitched voice.

"Liza, restrain Arisa from playing with my body while I'm investigating."

"Yes, I understood."

After making sure that Liza is holding Arisa who was going to stealthily stretch her hands toward my body tight, I dive into Lady Liedill's consciousness.



"Lady Liedill, although we have enough water and food, if we don't go back soon we'll run out of magic potion and support magic tools."

"It cannot be helped. Let's go back once we explore the next room."

I'm hauling Lady Liedill's memory with an overlooking point of view.

Apparently, Lady Liedill and her party have gone to the lowest layer.

There was a scout adventurer whom I saw in hero's party among her followers.

They were probably able to smoothly explore thanks to his guidance.

Or perhaps, they were led here by someone or something--.

"Is that the thing called guardian?"

Seeing something cowering in the corner of the room, Lady Liedill muttered so.

It seemed her mind knew that it was something different even while muttering.

I thought she had bad eyes, but apparently her [Dragon Eyes] has a power to see through the enemy's rank to an extent.

"Is that a turtlekin with purple shell?"

"No, that's not it--"

The adventurer negated with shaken voice.

"T-that's the demon lord."

Hearing the adventurer's remark, Lady Liedill was convinced, "Just as I thought."

"De-Demon lord?!"

"That's not a mere monster?"

"Looks like it's sleeping, let's escape while we can."

It seems she thinks that it's the right thing to do even while feeling disappointed with her followers' shaken and timid remarks.

"All members, retreat quietly. I forbid you to whisper hereafter."

After whispering that, there was a cliche sound of 'crack' under Lady Liedill's foot.

She stepped on and broke fragile pebbles, not a twig.

The thing reflected on the eyes of Lady Liedill who turned her head timidly is a purple shell that's standing up, and two purple embers-like things peering from its inside.

"Everyone, run with all your might!"

Whipping her body that's been withered by fear, Lady Liedill runs. Fortunately, the demon lord hasn't stood up yet.

"There's an invisible wall on the exit!"

"Get away! Steel Cutting Flash!"

Lady Liedill shouted her technique name out loud, but that transparent barrier warded it off like bamboo against wind.

"Strange! It lets my sword pass but not my body!"

I don't know any magic like that so it's probably either the Dungeon Master's ability or the demon lord's Unique Skill.

--ZHWWWUUUUUUUWN.

The demon lord's roar echoed in the room, everyone besides Lady Liedill is binded by [Fear] state.

"This much fear. Compared to the true fear, it's nothing special."

At this time, the thing that appeared in her mind was me in ratkin disguise.

That time I was just using Coercion skill a bit right.

"Lightning magic huh, that's troublesome."

Countless lightning balls that appeared beside the demon lord assault Lady Liedill and her party.

"Block them! Touya's Shield!"

Lady Liedill casted the magic tool she took out of her pouch, and then paper sheet-like thin films piled up, producing a defensive wall.

The wall blocked the demon lord's lightning balls, thunderous roar that could inflict pain on your ears and static electricity that could make your hair's end stand scattered in the surroundings.

The defensive wall was crumbling down, but it was able to block the last lightning balls somehow.

According to her memory, it seemed to be a disposable item given by the Weasel Empire's tactician.

"Touya's Key, open the door!"

She used a disposable item in the shape of a key, and then a black hole appeared on the mysterious barrier.

This is like the "Three Pieces of Charms" folklore.

Next, she sprinkled [Mad Warrior Breath] given by [Brains] on her companions to forcefully release them from their Fear state.

Quite rough, but I think it's an effective countermeasure.

"Go! Warriors, to the battlefield beyond this black hole."

Lady Liedill shouted out loud, her companions replied with a war cry and then they jumped into the hole on the barrier.

She was going to follow after the last one, but at the next moment, her view completely changed like there was a frame drop.

--It's Draw (Evil Snap).

It seems Lady Liedill cannot grasp what's happening, but this is a type of space magic that was also used by the red-body demon in my fight with the [Golden Wild Boar King].

The demon lord who got up on all four is glaring at the Lady Liedill. Its face and and limbs were not of turtle, but rat.

"gaRYUIEri, DWYNi" <TLN: the raw is just as incomprehensible, that's just how this demon lord talks.>

"Demon lord's technique huh."

While venting her frustration, Lady Liedill took an [Acceleration] magic potion from her pouch and drank it.

It's a forbidden reinforcement medicine that the hero Hayato used in his fight with the yellow-body demon.

"wan, naaaa, gooooooooooom."

--Wanna go home?

Roar with a meaning reached the ears of her accelerated self.

"Touya's Chain. Let me exceed the limit--<<Selflessness>>."

Along with her words, illusionary sounds of chain could be heard.

Lady Liedill executes Flickering Movement while dodging the demon lord's attacks.

Resistance, like running inside water, assaults her body, the little skin that's exposed is cut by the wind.

Her twin swords are clad in red light.

"Steel-Cutting Grass-Splitting Flash."

Slashing attack that's far faster than the one I received in the weasel empire assails the demon lord.

Its bare rat limbs are torn, purple body hair and blood splash.

The afterglow draws hexagram-like traces, the demon lord falls down in its pool of blood.

--I did it!"

The future might have changed if only she attacked more.

However, there is no [What if] in a battle.

--ZHWUUU.

Purple light shines in the pool of blood.

"What grotesque."

Lady Liedill took some distance away while muttering, and drank mid magic power potion from her pouch.

She blocks the lumps of silver shot by the demon lord with the swords in her hands.

--Rocket punch?

Wire-like things pull back the punches, they attach back to the arms of the mecha-like reinforced suit that the demon lord is wearing.

It somehow looks like a hero I watched in my childhood.

"It's my turn now--"

Lady Liedill whose magic power has recovered shouts out loud, but then she collapses as if she's lost her strength.

--Time out already huh."

The sluggishness similar to when I collapsed from overworking in my company in the past assails Lady Liedill.

Her hands lost their strength, the sounds of the swords falling to the ground reached my ears while having no sense of touch.

"Heyaa, these natives sure are capable."

Unlike her hazy view that can't even distinguish the surrounding, her ears can still properly pick up the sounds from the surroundings.

"Yoo, you alright?"

"hu, HUNGrYyY"

"Ok, ok. Mikudo Hamburger and Jukyuro Ramen, eat all you want--"

--MUESHIMUESHIHAYGUEEEEEWN.

Sounds of the demon lord's roar, gouged ground and small rocks hitting her armor reached my ears.

"Ueee, how gross, that'd appear in me-chan's dream."

I smelt something putrid, sounds of something devouring greedily could be vaguely heard.

"Hey now, I'll put out proper food here, so don't eat, those things."

The accuracy of information that Lady Liedill is getting is decreasing. Looks like she's about to faint.

"Fuhn, a beauty that I-chan like, but I-chan am not into bestiality."

For some reason, only his voice can be clearly heard.

--Bestiality?

Besides her slightly longish ear, Lady Liedill who's a longearkin (Booch) looks exactly like a normal human.

The term doesn't fit.

The recollection still continues while I'm thinking.

It appears there's no stop.

"It's a shame, but guess I-chan'll use her to keep that abnormal guy away."

I relive the experience of having Lady Liedill's soul binded by something.

It feels quite disgusting. The worst, I want to hit the Dungeon Master right here and now.

"Don't think she can win at all, but buy enough time for me-chan to run 'kay."

After saying that, the Dungeon Master left.



"--Fuh, that was tiring."

After severing my connection with Lady Liedill, I catch the black mist flowing into my head and tear it off.

Apparently, Lady Liedill was also used as a booby trap.
He probably tried to see if I could be [Ruled] through Lady Liedill.

"Good work! Now Liza-san! Release me already."

Arisa who's taken her shoes off and desperately stretching her toes toward me appeals to Liza in a hurry.

She probably wanted to join the girls who are snuggling on me like cats in the cats pot.

Lady Karina was also resting her head on my lap together with Tama and Pochi, but she quickly took some distance at lightning speed the moment our eyes met.

"Master, may I?"

"Yes, you can release her."

I nod to Liza.

The released Arisa was making a jump like a certain third generation thief, but I catch her with [Magic Hand], and tell Arisa, who's fuming in the air, the information I got.

"Arisa, it seems the Dungeon Master here is either a reincarnated or a transported person."

15-14. Hero VS Demon Lord

*

"Hero-sama, Seina-dono has returned."

The small Seina who went ahead during our short break runs up to me. The excessive fat on her breasts seems obstructive. It's a shame, she has a childish face and all.

I think childish face looks better with super smooth flat line like of those little girl maids.

"He's there, he wasn't wearing the thin turtle shell like before, it's silver metal armor now."

"He 『Transform』ed again...."

I recalled how the demon lord was like the first time we met him.

The demon lord at that time looked like a ratkin person with purple fur you can see anywhere but with persecution complex.

The moment he saw us, he screamed, made a strange pose, wore an insect animal suit and [Transform]ed with a purple muffler on his neck.

His level was only 55 when we first met, but it rose every time we fought him and his level the last time we fought was 62.

It should've been far lower than my 71, but his [Transform]ed self was surprisingly strong.

We probably wouldn't have the advantage if he didn't have the limitation of quickly running out of gas and stopped moving.

We lost our companions due to that carelessness though.

I don't wanna feel like that ever again.

"But, is it alright to leave it to Satou-chi? Shouldn't I go instead?"

"It's alright, Satou should be able to do something about the Dungeon Master."

I told Seina with confidence that has no basis.

That guy will be absolutely fine--he's a mysterious guy who oozes such atmosphere.

It's frustrating, but I can entrust Honey to that guy.

"I think Satou can do it somehow."

"It's rare for Wi to be that believing."

"Really?"

The other girls don't seem to have any objection either.

It was only Rin who said some sison remark, "But, I still won't hand over Sera."

I've advised her that minding it too much would produce the opposite result, but it seems she loves her little sister too much she can't control herself.

"We'll defeat the demon lord this time."

Declaring so to my companions, I head toward the hall where the demon lord is waiting.

There's only two demon lords left.

Nanashi reported that the demon lord on a different continent was destroyed by the Ancient Dragon's breath.

The only two left are the demon lord ahead and the demon lord in the ratkin country.

I'm sorry for Nanashi, but I'll let him to handle the demon lord in the ratkin country that hasn't showed any sign at all.

--Once I'm done with this fight and win against the demon lord, I'll go back to Japan. Japan where my little sister and my childhood friend are waiting.



--ZHWWWUUUUUUUWN.

The demon lord roared the moment we entered the hall, purple waves are running on top of his silver armor.

"Hayato."

"Yeah, I know."

I nod at Mary who looks anxious.

"He's transforming! Let's stall for time until the effect expires."

His appearance remains the same even after the effect expires, but he won't be in the overwhelming reinforced state anymore.

We're aiming for the time when the purple aura disappears.

"It looks weak somehow."

"Doesn't that Unicorn-like horn look dangerous?"

"And he's hunching a bit, he probably attacks mainly by charging and stabbing with that horn."

The girls are looking at the demon lord who's wearing (tokusatsu) hero-like costume, analyzing him.

I'm familiar with that appearance.

"Rin, Wi, attack him with the Fire Bird Wand and arrows!"

The two quickly attack as per my instruction.

"Have you forgotten Hayato, attacks won't work on him during the transformation."

"Yeah, I know."

While assenting Mary, I watch over the outcome of the attacks.

"Ah, it was blocked."

"Is that the Flexible Shield of Force magic?"

"The shape looks strange."

Just as I thought--.

It's the worst kind among something with a unicorn-shaped horn that I know.

"That's an absolute defense. I'll be the vanguard and restrain him. Do only attacks with knockback until its effect expires!"

"I'm going too."

"It'll be dangerous with only Hayato."

Rusus and Fifi grinned and volunteered to help restrain the demon lord. It's dangerous, but I'm honestly saved if the two are with me.

"Let's see which's stronger, my great 『Divine Power (Unique Skills)』 or your 『Transform』."

I activate my [Strongest Lance (Nothing cannot be Penetrated)], and [Invincible Shield (Nothing can Penetrate)], and close in the demon lord with Flickering Movement.

The assault rifle that the demon lord produced out of nowhere spouts fire.

"Tsk, explosive bullets huh!"

My Invincible Shield blocked the small explosions, but the shock still hit my body.

He must know the way to fight against someone with absolute defense too.

"Heee~n, here here~"

--ZHWUUUWN.

Provoked by Rusus, the demon lord averts his attention away from me. The demon lord's stout arm grazed Rusus.

"Ouch."

Even though it only grazed her, Rusus's arm guard was blown off, fresh blood scattered in the air.

The demon lord shot Rusus to finish her, but she dodged the attack by using the terrain.

"Rusus, get back."

"I'll leave it to you Fifi!"

In Rusus's place who's fallen back to recover, this time it's Fifi's turn to restrain the demon lord while waiting for me.

"Kept you waiting, Fifi."

"Ehen, I still can go on."

I smile back at Fifi's fearless words and fling words filled with provocation skill at the demon lord.

"Let's test who's stronger between you and the great me--<<Shining Strike Rush>>"

My holy sword Arondight clad in blue light stabs at his octagonal shield. Metallic and heavy sounds echo, blue and purple light are intensely scattering in the surroundings.

The light splinters that went around the back of my shield burn my back, but I can't use the [Limitless Recovery] here yet.

Believing in Loreiya and the others healing magic, I concentrate at the demon lord in front of me.

"WOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

--ZHWWWUUUUUUUWN.

Not losing to my yell filled with fighting spirit, the demon lord roared deafeningly.

Responding to our shouts, intense light of blue and purple dyed the surroundings.

The magic power and after-waves that fill the place is warping the surrounding air and floors.

With a boom sound, my body fell down about 10 centimeters. The ground below us probably sunk.

Without getting distracted by unnecessary things, I devote myself to strike the demon lord with all my power.



"....A draw huh."

Our strength-on-strength competition was never settled as I endured the 180 seconds until the time-out.

The purple aura covering the demon lord's body has disappeared.

Judging from the terrible sights of the floors and the walls, my companions seem to have prepared various support attacks to stop the demon lord from fleeing.

"But, now's our great turn."

I declared as such to the unmoving demon lord.

--ZHWUUU.

The demon lord roared lightly.

"Dunno what you're trying to pull, but don't think it'll let you do that easily."

The slashing attack of the holy sword Arondight swings down on the demon lord.

Without being able to guard with his arms or weapons, the demon lord received the holy sword with his purple costume.

I can feel the sensation of magic defense destruction from the holy sword. However, the costume that's not protected by Unique Skill can't possibly defend against the holy sword clad with the effect of [Strongest Lance (Nothing Cannot be Penetrated)].

--ZHWWUUUUN.

The demon lord's costume split open, purple blood scatter, the demon lord

falls down behind.

The blood spilled on the ground cause white smoke.

The acid blood is dangerous enough to break through mid level defensive magic, but my [Invincible Shield (Nothing can Penetrate)] and Loreiya's advanced defensive magic block it all.

I stop thinking needless things and ready the next technique.

The blue light draws a perfect circle, matching the holy sword's movement.

"--<<Shining Blade>>"

Blue light assaults the demon lord crawling on the ground.

--ZHWWWWUUUUUUUUWN.

The demon lord roared while emitting purple right before my finisher hit it.

He might be going to use the directional anti-personnel mine like before. I jump back while still maintaining the stance of the technique.

"There's no change in equipment, only his appearance that's changed a bit. Purple light seem to be leaking from his joints somehow."

Don't tell me--.

I appraise him, his state's changed to [Berserker].

He's way too faithful to the original. I can feel yer love y'know.

--ZHWWWWUUUUUUUUWN.

Together with the roar, the demon lord jumps up into the air.

With a woosh, dark purple wings of light appear on the demon lord's back.

"Convenient."

A bit later after Wi's muttering, Mary and the others who have finished their chanting releases the forbidden spell.

"".... ■■■■■■■■■■ <<Divine Plasma Pole>>""

The blinding pillar of light appears in the center of the hall, swallowing the demon lord.

--ZHWWWUUUUUUUWN.

"We did it!"

"Yeah, with such a powerful magic, even a demon lord shouldn't get out of it unscathed."

I could hear the black knights' cheers.

--ZHWWWUUUUUUUWN.

And, as if ridiculing them, the demon lord roared to signify his well being.

"I-Impossible! How could one who belongs to evil be unhurt inside the forbidden spell of light magic!"

"Oh, God Parion, please bestow upon us your protection."

The black knights and Parion priests who have just been added to this party have begun to panic hearing the demon lord's roar.

--ZHWWWUUUUUUUWN.

His hands pierce through the light pillar, and then he shows up behind the hands that bend the light.

--He's truly unhurt.

Even the yellow demon whose level was higher than this demon lord shouldn't be fine after receiving such a forbidden spell.

Just why--.

"It's like the time when the demon lord was about to transform."

--That's it.

I understand after hearing Rin's muttering.

That berserker state was a second transformation huh.... I've made a huge mistake.

Purple light is flickering in the demon lord's mouth.

"Loreiya, block it!"

I shot <<Shining Blade>> toward the demon lord's mouth at the same time I gave the order. I couldn't even afford to shout out the technique's name.

"O Divine Talisman! 『Protection』!"

The Talisman that Loreiya holds high up produces blue light that protects my companions.

We shouldn't abuse it considering the compensation, but any other method would not make it in time.

The defensive wall created by the Talisman and the dark purple breath are scattering intense sparks and light on the surrounding.

The shocking thunderous sound is really making my stomach queasy.

My ears have been buzzing for a while, I can't hear well.

--ZHWWWUUUUUUUWN.

After he had done emitting the breath, the demon lord roared at the ceiling.

Responding to that, oozing shadows beside the demon lord are--.

『Arrived as ordered. Brown Third, obtruding here.』

『The same, Brown First, obtruding.』

Two greater demons gushed out of the space.

Both of them are level 60.

Greater demons that we had never encountered so far, appearing at such timing....

"Hmph, greater demons are no match for me no matter how many they are!"

Even while feeling the absurdity, I rouse up my fighting spirit by feeding on that indignation.

However, the bad news continue--.

"Hero-sama, there's a big crowd of monsters behind."

"Please look above! So many slimes they're touching the ceiling!"

The black knights reported.

"Hayato, leave the greater demons to us."

"Yea, that's right. Having no moment to show up feels lonely."

Rusus and Fifi glare at the greater demons with their beloved swords in their hands.

"Wi and I will support Rusus and Fifi. Seina, please help the black knights to deal with the small fries and the slimes, Rin and Loreiya, fight the demon lord with Hayato!"

Mary gave orders to our companions without hesitation.

I feel we're at a bit of disadvantage, but we should be able to manage somehow.

In short, we can turn things around if the great me just defeat the demon lord.

"Hayato! Dodge!"

Crisis Perception skill reacted at the same time as Rin's warning.

I evaded the black sword right before it touched me, but I still got a shallow wound.

"Fumu, good reaction. Brown Zero, pleased to make you an acquaintance."

A brown greater demon whose upper body appeared from the shadow sinks back into it.

My counterattack didn't reach it, as the shadow I hit was merely a shadow.

"You shouldn't look away, Hero. Brown Seventh obtruding."

"Hoohoo, where are you looking at Hero. Brown Sixth obtruding--"

I couldn't even crack jokes while fighting against the despair of the appearing greater demons.

Compared to the school of the Great Monstrous Fish Tovkezeera the yellow demon summoned back then, there's still a hope to turn this situation around.

--ZHWWWUUUUUUUWN.

The demon lord's roar echoed, its wings increased to six with the third transformation.

The halo on his back makes him look like a transcendental being here.

--However, that's merely a look.

He's still way off from being transcendent.

Ya can't be one if you're not at least as senseless as Nanashi.

"GUOAAAAAAAAA"

"T-The monsters spurted out!"

While hearing the black knights' and Seina's scream behind, my mind has made up to defeat the demon lord even if we both end up dying. It's sad that I won't be able to meet my little sister and my childhood friend in the former world anymore, but My Honey who's in the same labyrinth will be in danger if I don't defeat him here.

"《SING》Arondight, 《PLAY》Tunas"

I recited the Scriptures of the Holy Sword and the Holy Armor that had lost its effect once again, activated my trump card, the [Limitless Recovery], and drank the [Acceleration] magic potion last resort.

--Let's do this, demon lord.

I'll put some intense get-well gifts in your face.

Hero's life ain't that cheap y'know!

15-15. Hero VS Demon Lord (2)

*

Satou's here. I like protagonists who appears when the going gets tough, but I end up distrusting them if they always appear at the most ideal time. It must be just because they're loved by the goddess of fortune right?



"Fuuh, this is the last one."

"Still, for it to be only breakable by the Dragon Spear or Master's fist, a shield created by these Fake Cores would be quite strong don't you think."

Arisa spoke of her impression as we destroyed the last Fake Core.

"Brittle~?"

"Pochi can easily break it with her fingers nodesuyo?"

Tama and Pochi picked the fake core's fragments on the ground and showed Arisa its brittleness.

"Master, we've collected several Golem Souls and a Golem Heart from the guardians earlier."

"Thank you Liza."

Liza collected softball-sized magic cores and an item specific to this labyrinth.

I put the loot into the Storage.

There were some movements on the map I had put on display at the smallest size.

Looks like the hero party has arrived at the demon lord's room.

"Master, this is bad! Teleport and Clairvoyance have been blocked."

"--You're right. It seems the labyrinth's wall is preventing it since teleporting by sight is still possible."

"Item Box, 『Open』--Looks like this one is usable."

It appears we can't get out using teleport.

Looking at the Menu, moving with [Unit Movement] is still possible.

Monsters were gathering in the room where the hero is fighting the demon lord while I was checking things.

"I'm worried about hero and the others. Let's quickly aid them."

After telling that, I head back to the relay base with the girls.

In order to increase our speed, Arisa and Mia who can't use Flickering Movement are being carried by Liza and Nana, and Lulu whose Flickering Movement skill level is low is being carried by me.

Thanks to using Flickering Movement and Ground Shrink alternatively, we arrived at the column-shaped magma room next to the relay base in only several minutes.

Lady Karina was slightly late, but she caught up somehow.

I recover the girls' magic power using [Magic Power Transfer] while they're having some drinks and light meals.

"Masfhew (Master)~?"

Her words were hard to understand since there was a beef jerky in her mouth.

"That looks like an enemy."

The space where Tama was pointing at warped, and a brown greater demon appeared blocking the narrow passage.

"As decreed by my master, Brown Fifth--"

"Liza."

"Understood."

Without listening to the end, Liza's Dragon Spear pierced through the greater demon's magic core.

The greater demon tried to bear hug Liza as its last useless struggle, but that never came to fruition.

"Aku Soku Zan~?" <TLN: Aku=evil, Soku=immediate, Zan=Slay.>

"Judgment, nanodesu!"

Tama and Pochi swallowed their beef jerkies and delivered the finishing blow to the greater demon.

"Eii"

Lulu's new accelerated cannon shot out, and blew off the upper half of a greater demon that was appearing on the wall beyond the passage.

"Cleaning up the rest."

Arisa's space magic turned the rest of the demon's body into dust along with the surrounding wall.

"Mwu."

"Our turn will come, so I tell Mia."

"Everyone is too strong desuwa."

Mia, Nana and Lady Karina who didn't have any turn complained.

During that relaxed atmosphere, suddenly there's sounds of dropping stones and something falling into water.

"This time they're destroying our footholds huh--"

The footholds around us have begun to fall, the room becomes a <<Neutral Magic>> room where magic and skills that use magic power can't be used.

"Don't worry be happy~?"

"Good grief, if it weren't us, we'd have been wiped out long time ago."

The vanguard group sink their toes into the wall and forcibly hang onto it. I secure the powerless rear guard girls by the same combination of movements I used earlier.

We forcefully enter the tunnel and resume moving.

We advance through the bewildering changing passages with the optimum route, heading to the boss room where the hero party is. The incorrigible [Dungeon Master] kept trying to hinder us, but we easily cleared them all, continuing to advance the passages.

It feels like I'm hearing the Dungeon Master grinding his teeth, but I must be just imagining things.

Nana who acts as the vanguard gives her report the moment we entered the last passage before the boss room.

"Master, there's a crowd of monsters to the front so I tell."

"Liza, Pochi, take care of the front. Tama, support them."

"Understood."

"Yes, nanodesu."

"Aye aye sir~"

I received Arisa from Liza and gave them the instructions to eliminate the monsters.

It's a crowd of monsters with levels ranging from 30 to 50.

Every monster has troublesome abilities like paralysis and petrification, but as long as the girls are protected by my support magic, there is no problem even if their opponent is a greater demon.

I can't say that it's perfect though since there's a lot of abnormal demon lords.

"Breakthru~?"

"Nanodesu!"

Tama and Pochi shouted from beyond the howling monsters and bloody smell.

Looks like they've arrived at the boss room.



"Good, hero and the others are safe."

I grasp the situation while feeling relieved.

We're at the entrance of the hall where the hero and the others are fighting, it's an elevated ground where Princess Maryest, Priestess Loreiya, critically injured black knights and several members of the entourage who have fallen unconscious are located.

The black knights are fighting the monsters, piling up the bodies even while being mortally wounded.

Monster corpses and critically injured black knights are all over the slope to the hall too.

It's probably thanks to Priestess Loreiya's magic that they haven't died.

Those girls are collapsed on the ground due to the unusual [Overdose] state from overusing magic recovery potion.

Apparently, they're already at their limit just as we arrived.

In the back of the undulated hall, the hero and the demon lord is fighting, the hero is supported by Lady Ringrande the [Sky-tearing Witch] and Miss Wiyaryi the archer, while the demon lord is helped by two greater demons. The children-like lesser demons split from the greater demons are hindering them.

And, Rusus and Fifi are being chased by three greater demons on a do-or-die marathon in the center of the hall.

I never thought that I would see a real-life spectacle of an MMO raid war.

There are flying monsters up in the air of the hall, attacking when they find a chance.

After confirming the situation in 0.1 second, I gave the green light to the girls.

"Demons! Jump in like insects if you do not fear your ruin, so I announce."

With Nana's ranged provocation which somehow felt chuunibyou-ish, five greater demons turned their attentions toward Nana and came attacking in.

Together with the flying monster and the children-like lesser demons.

"Like moths to flames! Three consecutive Blue Inferno, for all!"

The blue flames released by Arisa burned down the demons and the flying monsters in the room.

The roaring sounds are slightly painful on the ears.

Arisa didn't have enough magic power to consecutively shoot three Blue Inferno magic, so she drank a high magic recovery potion after every shot. Her magic power should be replenished during the magic's casting time.

Rusus and Fifi are screaming behind a rock, but they're fine since they're protected by my space magic there.

The cloud of dust from the explosion is coming to this high ground so I blow it away with [Blow] magic.

"Monopoly~?"

"No fair nodesu! Pochi also wants to have a part nodesu!"

"You two, don't let your guard down."

After Liza reproved them, greater demons who used their friends as shield showed up beyond the white cloud. The one they used as shield lost all its health point and disappeared into dust.

Only two have survived.

"Nn, Tempest."

The gold-colored artificial spirit Garuda who's floating behind Mia shot out golden feathers clad in lightning.

The barrage of golden feathers blow the two greater demons to the ceiling, making a violent whirlpool that looks like cloud of blood, cutting up the greater demons.

"Pochi, Tama, let's back up with Magic Edge Cannon."

"Aye~?"

"Roger nanodesu."

Liza is using Magic Spear Douma, while Tama and Pochi are using their True Silver magic swords to shoot a barrage of Magic Edge Cannon.

It doesn't look like they're serious, the power seems a bit weak.

Lulu is cleaning up the small fries who escaped Arisa's attack with a sub-machine gun-type magic gun.

I walk to Priestess Loreiya and Princess Maryest while watching over the girls.

"I'm glad that you two are safe."

"Satou-san, thank you for your help."

"Did that little princess Arisa just use the magic that only exist in legend?"

"Yes, she did. She got a bit of help from an Artifact however."

I'm sorry for Arisa, but since Princess Maryest's reaction was a bit extreme, I made up some story a bit.

"More importantly, please use this. It's a recovery item I got from the queen of the fairy."

"Sir Pendragon, right now we can't--"

"Please don't worry."

I stopped Princess Maryest who was about to say their [Overdose] states, let her grasp a crystal pendant and pushed its tip.

Of course, since it's merely an accessory, I use [Magic Power Transfer] right at that timing to recover her magic power.

I do the same with Priestess Loreiya and the preparation here is complete.

I head to Hero Hayato to help him.

After rescuing Lady Ringrande from an Emerald Golem that appeared out of nowhere, I stand beside the hero who's fighting the demon lord.

"I've kept you waiting, Hayato-sama."

"Is that you Satou, thanks for coming."

The hero has wounds all over his body, so I sprinkle mid magic potion to heal his external wounds.

I used recovery magic at the same time since the effect would be too weak otherwise.

"Allow me to help."

After telling so, I draw the fairy sword and stand beside him.

My level is public ally 50 so there should be no problem in joining this fight.

Moreover, there is something that I must do on the front line.

"I won't let Satou to steal all the spotlight."

Lady Ringrande takes up her [Lightning Great Sword] and stands on the opposite side.

Miss Wiyaryi is standing-by behind.

Looks like she's focused to be the support.

"Don't die."

"Yes, of course."

Like a willow, I parry all the attacks of the demon lord who came attacking on all fours like a mad beast, and prepare the backhands when the hero attacks.

The demon lord's movement is agile and tricky, so it's quite difficult not to overdo it.

"Satou! Don't steep in too far ahead! The demon lord attack can scoop your meat even if it misses y'know!"

"Yes, Hayato-sama."

I kept close to the demon lord since there was a little something I needed to do, but since the hero warned, I took some distance away.
I should make it in time from here if I'm just ready with Ground Shrink.

"F-fast! Leaving Hayato and the demon lord aside, I can't believe Satou can also move as fast...."

Since Lady Ringrande was very surprised, I move as if I evade the demon lord's attacks by accident while consciously keeping my speed at the level of an ordinary person.

It seemed difficult at a glance, but it's actually quite easy thanks to [Foresight: Antipersonnel Battle] skill.

Of course Lady Ringrande isn't only watching without doing anything. She hindered the demon lord's movement using quickly chanted [Explosions] at good timings.

"Thank you for waiting!"
"Don't forget about me too."

Rusus and Fifi also participate to cut up the demon lord.
Unlike Lady Ringrande, the two who are pure warriors seem to be able to catch up to the demon lord's agile movement.

"Hook, line, and sinker~?"
"Chop chop nanodesu."

Starting with the beastkin girls, the girls gleefully exterminate the monsters who rushed inside the hall at the entrance.
It seems the Dungeon Master has ran out of bullets, there's no strong monster to be found anywhere.

"Satou, behind you!"

"Thank you, Wiyaryi-san."

I cut up the Dust Golem that appeared behind me using the fairy sword reinforced with Magic Edge.

The magic core that fell from the crumbling golem revives into an Ash Mud Golem.

It's probably a harassment from the Dungeon Master.

"Tsk, don't get in my way!"

The hero seems to be piling up stresses from this harassment.
Let's curtail it at the source.

"Tama, please collect the magic core."

"Nin nin~?"

When I muttered in whisper, a pink ninja that appeared from the shadow made a hand signal for, "Roger", and disappeared into the shadow.
Further, a Tama doll takes Tama's place fighting the monsters.

"Done~?"

I heard Tama's small voice from the shadow.

"Thanks, that really helps."

"Ehehe~"

I said my thanks at the shadow, and then Tama's presence vanished after leaving a bashful voice.

The real body changed place with the doll and resumed the battle with the other girls.

"Looks like the small fry has stopped appearing."

"Even Dungeon Master's assistance is probably not inexhaustible."

I replied Lady Ringrande's muttering while dodging the demon lord's claw.

"Alright! The 『Transformation』 ended. Rin, Satou, let's press on him!"

Checking the hero's words, I see that the purple light that had been emitting from the demon lord since a while ago has disappeared.

--ZHWWWUUUUUUUWN.

I wanted to persuade the demon lord if he could talk, but it seems he has lost his ego already.

Lady Ringrande erases the lightning balls that appeared around the demon lord with [Break Magic].

She's pretty great considering the demon lord's level is higher.

"Then, please excuse me for this--Magic Edge Rush (Vorpal Lance)."

Imitating Pochi's finisher, I perform a charging stabbing attack.

The fairy sword would break if I did it seriously, so I curb the power to be at the same as level 50 Pochi.

--ZHWWWUUUUUUUWN.

I break the thick magic barrier that the demon lord created.

Stopping just before I hit the main body.

"Twin Sword Dance!"

"Great Sword Cut!"

Rusus and Fifi who showed up by slipping in hit the demon lord with two contrasting techniques.

The finishers cut up the demon lord's body that's been stripped off its magic defense.

--ZHWWWUUUUUUUWN.

The nimble Rusus was able to dodge the demon lord's counterattack, but Fifi who stiffened after using the technique got hit and fell to the ground. Her health point decreased greatly, but it was still just a normal serious injury.

"This is the end, demon lord!"

Hero's holy sword, Arondight bursts out with intense blue light.

"<<SHINING STRIKE RUSH>>"

The hero's finisher on the demon lord--.



"Fuuh, that was way too close, I thought I-chan would die." <TLN: He said 'Ore-chan'. Ore is a masculine form of 'I'.>

A weaselkin with purple body hair said with a jest while looking over the small ratkin demon lord on the ground.

His voice is trembling contrary to his tone.

This place is the <<Dungeon Master Room>> located in a different map than the one I was in just now.

--Yeah, I was worried that you wouldn't come to help."

The weaselkin turned around in shock to hear my voice.

"Hello, nice to meet you, Dungeon Master-dono, or perhaps--"

He saved the demon lord at the last minute, it was worth it waiting on the front line.

--I should call you Weaselkin Demon Lord?"

Toward the last demon lord prophesied in the oracle, I asked.

15-16. Hero VS Demon Lord (3)

*

Satou's here. I sometime see the argument, [Is human right necessary for villains] made in various media. I think there are mixed views about this particular topic, but I believe a lesson that incites "doing crimes is not worth it" thought is needed at least.



"Acha~ This is it huh."

The weaselkin demon lord's expression stiffened for an instant, but then he went back to his usual jestful behavior.

I put a marker on the weasel demon lord during this chance.

"Rat fatty, looks like this is the end for us-chan eh."

--ZHWUU.

The ratkin demon lord in the corner of the room weakly replied the weasel demon lord.

He's pinning his nose, it doesn't look like he's going to make a move.

His health point is running out too, he looks like he'll die if left alone.

"Sorry but, make it as painless as possible 'k?"

The weasel demon lord claps his own neck and turn a miserable face at me.

Strange. He's acting quite gallant--.

I see the other hand of the weasel demon lord who's in front of the Dungeon Core moving restlessly on the opposite side.

--Yup, that's that huh.

"I forbid the use of Dungeon Core."

Weasel demon lord's fingers on the control board of the Dungeon Core stop moving.

"Oh no."

Purple light flow on the weasel demon lord's body--.

"I forbid the use of Unique Skills."

"Bit too late, see."

--A missile-like thing appeared between me and the weasel demon lord.

The Crisis Perception made an intense reaction, I used Ground Shrink and touched the missile, putting it away into my Storage.

Its AR reading, [USA-made ICBM], was shown for an instant before it disappeared.

The modern weapons summon the rat demon lord used was this guy's power huh.

"Rat fatty!"

--ZHWWWUUUUUUUWN.

The rat demon lord who should have been half-dead roared.

The rat demon lord who's wearing a hero costume that looks like a creature with a medal on its forehead tears his own chest from both sides.

--What?

"Rat demon lord! I forbid the use of Unique Skills."

I used [Geass] on the rat demon lord while putting up Flexible Shields in front of me.

At the next moment, a cone-shaped radial heat ray burns down the <<Dungeon Master Room>>.

It's about as strong as the forbidden spell of fire magic that Arisa uses, <<White Inferno>>, or perhaps even more.

After shooting that, the rat demon lord fell down and began to convulse. Apparently, he used the last of his power for that attack.

"As expected of Rat Fatty! Even that abnormal shouldn't be unscathed after getting that kind of attack--there's no corpse?"

"I forbid you to act."

I bound the weasel demon lord from acting before his question was answered.

"J-just how--"

"No need for you to know."

I also bound the rat demon lord and heal him enough to not die.

"What are you going to do?"

"I can overlook your life at least if you quit being a demon lord and Dungeon Master."

I'll let him live as a normal person and atone for his sins.

"You serious?"

The weasel demon lord looks surprised to hear my answer.

"Yea, I promise."

After I said that, weasel demon lord began to laugh out loud.

After laughing for a while, his face suddenly turns serious--.

"Aren't ya so sweet eh? I-chan feel like vomiting."

--So he spat out.

"By any chance, did you hear our-chan circumstances from the emperor?"

Circumstances?

"Huh? The things about us being bound by the emperor's geass, forced to become demon lords, and put to the depth of the labyrinth to become decoys for the hero, see?"

I see, the mastermind is the weasel emperor huh.

"Don't tell me, you were saying you wanted to help us without knowing that?"

I nod at the weasel demon lord.

"Uwaah, way too soft, I can't understand."

His face warped as if saying, "He's beyond help", his dark eyes look down on me.

"Just saying, I-chan is a scoundrel eh?"

I know that.

"I even like being a Dun Mas. Dun Mas is nice y'know. Toying with people's life brutally and cruelly, snatching people's dignity in cold blood erotically, and playing around crushing people's sense."

Pictures that match the weasel demon lord's words are floating around him.

There are many acts of barbarity so bad I want to look away.

A rare feeling of anger to punish the weasel demon lord wells up within me.

"You want to save the life of someone who's done atrocities that would have been left in history if we were in the former world? Or are you someone who's against death penalty?"

However, my mind which was blinded by anger notified me of something wrong.

"You should kill villains when you get the chance eh? I mean--"

--That's it! The pictures.

He shouldn't have been able to display them if he couldn't use the Dungeon Core.

My Geass isn't working on him, or perhaps it's been canceled along the way--.

"Timeout."

I was thrown into the air of the lava room at the same time the demon lord spoke.

The room is still under the effect of <<Neutral Magic>>, so I can't use magic or skill that uses magic power.

Pulled by the gravity, I'm falling headlong toward the magma.

"Bye bye by~"

The weasel demon lord's laughter echo in the dungeon.

--Unfortunately for him, only this much can't be considered an adverse situation.

I kicked and sent a big rock I took out from my Storage flying and pierced it with my hand in mid-air.

"Whoae?"

Ignoring the shocked Dungeon Master, I invade the Dungeon Master again.

He had left behind a trail for me to re-invade due to him uselessly laughing.

"Oy oy, what the heck! What the hell are you!"

The demon lord who operated the Dungeon Core turned his head at me in surprise.

"Are you God or something!"

"Nope."

Since I don't know how the weasel demon lord canceled my Geass, I open the entrance to the sub-space labyrinth and throw him there.

For now, my priority is separating him away from the Dungeon Core.

The rat demon lord's geass doesn't seem to have been canceled, so I leave him behind and enter the sub-space labyrinth.

"dIE, eH!"

Lines of modern weapons open fire at me all at once.

The bullets scooped out the walls and broke the stalagmites, the cannonballs made holes on the ground while scattering dust and roaring sounds.

Numerous warhead missiles created blooming explosions, huge ballistic missiles blew away the labyrinth's floor and walls.

"sTiLl, aliVE eH!"

The weasel demon lord is in a dangerous state. He's becoming gigantic while his body is burbling.

"I forbid the use of Unique Skills!"

"USeless, useLESS, eH!"

Unaffected by my Geass, the weasel demon lord brought up anti-aircraft cannons and main tanks around him, and let out rain of bullets and shells at me.

I mow down the modern weapons with a shot of [Laser].

--UHYOOOOWN.

Looks like he used too much Unique Skills, the weasel demon lord lost all its sense and went completely mad.

At the same time, his skills, titles and Unique Skills are now displayed on

the AR readings.

Apparently, the concealment is gone when he went mad.

Weasel demon lord's Unique Skills are [Goods Summoning], [Freewheeling], and [Power that Brings Misdeeds].

That second skill probably neutralized my Geass.

I wanted to remove the [God's Fragment] with the power of demon lord Shizuka who's under my protection and let him live the rest of his life as a criminal, but that doesn't seem to be possible.

Since he's unaffected by my Geass, I can't guarantee the safety of demon lord Shizuka.

I don't want to do a hypocrisy that would endanger my friends.

--UUUHYYYYOOOOOOOOWN.

Combat helicopters and VTOL fighters appear on the spacious floor that has lost its walls and ceiling.

--UUUHYYYYOOOOOOOOWN.

He even brought up an Aegis warship and an aircraft carrier.

Although, there's no way the weasel demon lord would be fine after using that much Unique Skills power.

The demon lord's body is split, and then dark purple light leak out of the fissure.

I ignore all those military forces and jump near the weasel demon lord's foot with Ground Shrink.

Tremendous offensive attacked me, but everything happened behind.

"《TO VICTORY》"

The blade of the holy sword Excalibur shined dazzlingly after I recited the scripture.

With just a slight swing, the demon lord split in two, and the blue light overflowing from the holy sword evaporated the demon lord.

『That was cheating eh』

『How terrible』

『Poor I-chan』

I swing the Divine Sword at the [God's Fragments] that appeared on the place where the demon lord was, eliminating them all at once.

The dark purple particles are absorbed into the Divine Sword.

Still, considering the weasel demon lord was unaffected by my Geass, I should take his story about getting bound by the weasel emperor's Geass with a grain of salt.



"Earthquake?"

The labyrinth was shaking when I got back from the sub-space labyrinth. I check the control board of the nearby Dungeon Core.

>Title [Dungeon Master] Acquired.

Geh, you'd become a Dungeon Master just by touching it.

I can't acknowledge it, but I have to investigate things first right now.

"It's set to do Stampede?"

On top of having the recurrence speed of monsters inside the labyrinth set to maximum, it's set to do Stampede that will go toward the surface once the monsters reach a certain number.

Furthermore looking at the log, all of the magic power has been concentrated to make the volcano erupt.

If this keeps up, the monster Stampede and the eruption won't only swallow the labyrinth island, many people in Dejima island will also fall victim.

"Tsk, it's locked."

What's the point of having a password lock.

15 seconds until the monster Stampede, 20 seconds until the eruption.

『Hikaru! Give me a hand.』

『Okay.』

I asked help from Hikaru who was standing by in the solitary island palace.

"Kept you waiting."

"There's no time. I'll say it briefly. Stop the volcano eruption for a bit! 30 seconds is fine."

I actually wanted Arisa to help instead, but she must be exhausted from the fight with demon lord earlier, so I didn't want to strain her.

I move the monsters that were going to Stampede into the sub-space labyrinth.

As a Dungeon Master, this place is my home ground, and the labyrinth monsters are my units.

Therefore, there is no problem in moving the monsters with Unit Arrangement.

There were just a bit too many, it was bothersome.

"Thanks for waiting, Hikaru."

"Fast."

I clap the shoulder of Hikaru who's blocking the volcano's mouth with force magic.

It was just a few seconds, but there would have been victims in the labyrinth island if Hikaru didn't come.

"Keep blocking it for a little longer."

"Eh, wait!"

I jumped into the magma, and spread mesh-shaped [Magic Hand] and put all the lava it touch into my Storage.

It was a bit hot, but the heat only burned my clothes.

"You're being rash again. Arisa would scold you if she heard it you know?"

"I'll let myself be scolded if that happens."

And, at the solitary island palace--.

"Satou-san, I've finished moving the Unique Skills."

"Thank you Shizuka."

"Hikaru, take care of the rest."

"Un, I got it."

I entrusted the former rat demon lord to Hikaru, and transplanted the [God's Fragments] he had to the [Armored Rat] and [Glutton Weasel] monsters I created with the power of [Dungeon Master].

Naturally, the monsters couldn't hold the [God's Fragment] and turned

into demon lords. The rat demon lord had four god's fragments, so I pushed two on each one by force.

Of course, I made the demon lords' levels to be higher than the levels they had when we fought them.

I put both in a guardian room inside the labyrinth and then send them one by one to the room where the hero party are.

Of course, I've already told Arisa about it beforehand using [Telephone].



"Hayato!"

"Now!"

I saw Rusus and Fifi cutting the Armored Rat demon lord's legs, snatching away its mobility.

Apparently, the hero party is fighting the Armored Rat demon lord while Liza and the others are up against the Glutton Weasel demon lord.

The Armored Rat demon lord's body is wrapped in dark purple light.

"I won't let you!"

Miss Wiyaryi hit the demon lord with her arrow, creating a large explosion.

It looks like someone shared the equipment for Mia to her.

"<<Shining Strike Rush>>"

Multiplied with the effect of the Unique Skill, [Strongest Lance (Nothing cannot be Penetrated)], the blow pierced through the demon lord's purple defensive wall, sinking deep into its body.

"<<PLAY>> Tunas! <<SING>> Arondight!"

The hero's holy armor flashed blue light, and the holy sword explosively shined inside the demon lord's body.

"Break, demon lord! <<Shining Strike Break>>!"

With a spirited cry, the hero cuts the demon lord using his whole body to spring up.

The holy sword that comes out above is then swung down, creating a pentagram on its track.

The hero who landed with his back facing the demon lord swung his holy sword to clean the blood and put it back into its sheath.

"Here they come!"

Princess Maryest points at two floating purple light that appeared from the demon lord's body.

""Divine Gift Talisman! 『Seal』 the evils!""

The hero's followers pushed out the [Divine Gift Talisman] at the demon lord and shouted.

The purple lights are wrapped in blue crystals and then absorbed into the big Talisman that Princess Maryest has.

I see, so every generation of hero handled the [Fragments] with that huh.

"Mary! I'll leave the rest to you. I'll go help Sato's companions--"

The hero jammed his words when he turned around.

"Big win~?"

"Victory nanodesu!"

"It was easier than I expected."

It was probably because he saw me taking photo of the girls, who took victory poses on top of the Glutton Weasel demon lord's body, with a Japanese-style cell phone camera.

Of course the [God's Fragments] were disposed of by my Divine Sword.

Without yielding to the awkward silence, I step toward the hero after coughing once.

"Hayato-sama, congratulations for your success on subjugating the demon lord."

"Ye-yeah, thank you...."

I'm sorry for Hayato who seemed unsatisfied, but for now, let's celebrate the victory together.

15-17. Celebration

*

Satou's here. Parting with close friends is hard--that is something of the past, now it doesn't feel like we're apart since we can communicate anytime with SNS (Social Networking Service). But in a parallel world where there's a few ways to communicate--.



"Ha-Hayato!"

Lady Ringrande's desperate scream is echoing in the boss room.

Light falling from heaven is wrapping the hero.

The hero who seems exhausted is looking at the source of the light and saying something.

I couldn't grasp it well due to the glittering light around him, but the term [Parion] was certainly in his words.

The light disappears before long, silence rules the room.

"It was from God Parion. They'll pick me tomorrow morning y'see."

Looks like the hero is going back to his original world.

The one who breaks the funeral-like mood is Arisa.

"Let's have a celebration! After all the hard works defeating the demon lords, we have to have a super special feast!"

"Alright, it's a party!"

"Lemme take care of eating the food!"

Rusus and Fifi joined Arisa's suggestion the foremost.

"Un, let's cook the Saga cow meat roll and fried rice that Hayato likes."

"Let's bring out the special brandy too."

Miss Wiyaryi and Priestess Loreiya continued with cheerful voices too. Lady Ringrande and Princess Maryest seemed to brood over it, but they don't seem to object the celebration itself.



『Dungeon Master cannot leave the Labyrinth.』

When we were leaving the labyrinth, I was pulled back to the <<Dungeon Master Room>> along with that message.

『Master! Did something happen?』

"It's nothing. I'm returning soon, so you can go back to the inn ahead."

『Okay! If there's anything troubling you, call Arisa-chan anytime 'kay!』

I told Arisa that through World Phone.

『Dungeon Master is forbidden from leaving the Labyrinth.』

The owner of that voice seems to be the Dungeon Core.

"What should I do to hand over the position of Dungeon Master?"

"That's impossible. Only death will vacate the position of Dungeon Master."

I see, very inflexible.

However--.

"What's wrong, Satou."

"Nothing, only stopping by for a bit."

Hikaru and Shizuka were surprised to see me suddenly returning to the solitary island palace.

Looks like I can go out without problem with Unit Arrangement.
The [Dungeon Core] probably has the power to call me back only inside the labyrinth.

"Oh right, Tifa-chan from Echigoya called for you."

"Thanks, I'll go see her for a bit."

I enter the permanent gate and show up at Echigoya Firm.
Of course I didn't forget to change my appearance into Kuro.

"Kuro-sama, welcome back."

"I'm back."

Tifaliza who was doing paperworks stood and welcomed me.
She hit the bell that connects to the Manager room and then the manager rushed into the room accompanied with sounds of footsteps that weren't fit for a lady.

"Welcome back!"

"I'm back Manager. Your hair is disheveled you know."

I fix her slightly disheveled hair with my fingers.

"Kuro-sama, I have a report for you."

Tifaliza whose voice was subtly mixed with thorns called out.
After letting the Manager who seemed feverish to sit on a chair, I listen to Tifaliza's report.

"I believe you already know, but we've got a report from Lily-sama in Duchy Capital that two demon lords have been defeated in the Weasel Empire."

"Yes, the ratkin demon lord was defeated by the hero party, and the weaselkin demon lord was done in by our girls."

Tifaliza froze for an instant after hearing my reply.

"It was not by, Kuro-sama?"

"Yea, that's right."

Tifaliza seems to think about something.

"That's a spectacular feat! Since the dawn of history, there has never been a case where a demon lord is not defeated by hero-sama or the dragons."

Manager entered the conversation in her place.

"Were they defeated by the dragons before the era of Saga Empire?"

"There is a few records about the appearances of demon lords before that, but according to Earl Muno's research, many of them fought against the apostle of gods who descended."

--Fought?

"The apostles didn't defeat them?"

"Sealing the demon lords was the limit of what can be done at the time, less than 20 percents written in the ancient documents pertain the demon lords' defeat."

It seems apostles aren't that strong.

Perhaps, the Gods besides the Dragon God and the Demon God are weak.

"Come to think of it, you're quite well versed in the topic."

"Yes, many documents from Earl Muno had arrived at the Duchy House, so I read them with the permission of Mito-sama."

Manager told me so enthusiastically that if she were to have a tail, it would be buzzing around lively.

She looked like she really wanted to be praised, so I teased her a bit by saying, "Very diligent" and clapped her shoulder.

I almost patted her head like with the girls, but it would be rude to do that to a woman of blooming age.

For some reason, Manager looked a bit regretful.

"Kuro-sama, did your companions acquire the title of hero?"

Hearing a problematic remark from Tifaliza, I reflexively turn to her and urge her to continue.

Even after subjugating a demon lord, none of the girls besides Pochi gets the hero title.

"It seems that the Miko of Parion Temple has received an oracle about the appearance of a new hero...."

"It's probably not about us."

Pochi got her hero title a while back, and that title had changed to [True Hero] now.

I ask Tifaliza to notify me if she has new information, and then I go to the inn in Dejima Island through the solitary island palace.

I was a bit wary, but I didn't get pulled back to the labyrinth in Dejima Island.



"Well then, cheers for the demon lord's subjugation!"

""CHEERS!""

Seals of various famous liquors are opened, I put remembrance dishes of [This World] that the hero's followers told me.

There's a lot of meat dishes, probably because the hero likes them.

I've banned the girls from drinking alcohol, so they're mainly eating the dishes.

Lulu and I helped prepared the feast at first, but after the banquet was underway, the brownies dispatched from the solitary island palace, and gorgeous sexy maids from Saga Empire took over the cooking and the preparation.

"Satou! You drink too!"

"Yes, of course."

The hero who appeared with a sake bottle in one hand pour it in my cup. I also pour the Dragon Spring Liquor on my table to his cup.

"This great me wouldn't have won against the demon lord if you, Princess Arisa, and the others weren't there. My gratitude for your help."

"Please, we just helped a little. Hero-sama splendidly defeated the demon lord himself."

In fact, the manufactured demon lords was stronger than the original rat

demon lord.

The rat demon lord's personality didn't seem to be suited for combat after all.

"No, none of us could have imagined that there were two demon lords lurking in that labyrinth. If Princess Arisa didn't shout in a thundering voice when Satou disappeared, I might have lost my composure shamefully."

"I'm sorry for making you worry."

I had told Arisa and Liza beforehand that I was going to invade the Dungeon Master room so they didn't panic and continued eliminating small fries in the boss room.

For some reason, Hero's face is close.

Asides from liking young girls, his sexual orientation should be normal.

"Thank you Satou, no, Hero Nanashi."

Hero whispered on my ear.

Huh? There shouldn't be any factor that could expose me though?

"What are you talking about?"

"Don't worry. I won't tell anyone since it seems you're hiding it. To begin with, from such a hopeless situation with having two demon lords and one being a Dungeon Master, I can't think of any other guy who could drive the demon lord away from the boss room and deprive the right of Dungeon Master."

Looks like he didn't think that the demon lord left voluntarily.

"Moreover, you're unscathed until the end."

--Come to think of it.

"Satou, I'm leaving my friends in your care after I've gone back to Japan."

"What do you mean?"

I know that he's going back to Japan and all, but what's that got to do with me taking care of his followers I wonder.

The followers who participated in the demon lord subjugation will be famous in Saga Empire and their country right?

"According to Nono, the center of Saga Empire is getting suspicious lately."

"Are they going to cause war?"

"Yeah, radical opinions like 'destroy the Weasel Empire' have begun to appear even from moderate noble factions lately."

Perhaps Saga Empire also knew about the Weasel Empire's science?

"Take them under your protection if they're getting recruited into conflicts between people."

"Yes, please leave it to me. I'll shelter them in a safe place that can't be interfered by the people above ground."

Aside from Tama, it's impossible for anyone to stealthily invade the solitary island palace, and even Tama can't do it without me noticing.

"It's damn reassuring when you're the one saying that!"

Once the load on his shoulders got off, he drank the sake cup while looking relieved.

"If you have something this great me need to do, say it. I can give you Arondight if you want."

He stares at me after saying that.

I'll take advantage of this opportunity since I do have something to ask of

him.

"Then, could you mail these once you're back at your original world?"

"Letters?"

"Yes, it may not be the same world as mine, but I'd like to inform my family about my well-being."

I hand over a bundle of letters addressed to my family, friends and my co-workers including Mr. Overweight.

There are also letters from Hikaru and Arisa inside.

"Yea, I've got it. This great me will deliver it personally, be at peace."

"I'm counting on you."

I feel relieved since the hero accepted my request and hit his chest.

There's a high chance that Arisa's letter is mischievous, but Hero should be able to properly send it.

"Hayato, can I have a minute?"

"Rin?"

Lady Ringrande who looked somehow coquettish appeared with a wine cup in one hand.

The green silk dress she's wearing has an extremely adult-like cut, and she's scattering pheromones everywhere.

The black knights who are in casual wears have been stealing glances at her since a while ago.

"Satou, I'm borrowing Hayato."

"Yes, please take your time."

I saw Hero and Lady Ringrande off while feeling like a guardian.

"I-isn't this the NTR flag?"

"What are you going on about."

I lightly whack Arisa's head.

It's extremely normal to wish for the last memory when you're parting forever with your loved one.

I pray in my heart for Lady Ringrande's desire to be fulfilled.



"Looks like it's time."

The hero who's in a suit that wouldn't look strange in earth mutters.
His trusted sword, Arondight, is being hugged by Lady Ringrande.

"Mary, thank you for always supporting me ever since I was summoned in Saga Empire."

"Hayato, my hero-sama."

After hugging Hayato, Princess Maryest kisses him on the cheek.
Come to think of it, the hero's first person pronoun has changed from [Ore-sama] to [Ore].

"Seina, it's all thanks to you that I was able to stand up again after the complete destruction by that yellow bastard."

"Ehen, come here again if you want another slaps on the cheek."

Miss Seina who's enduring to cry musters her courage and hugs Hero.

And then, Loreiya, Rusus, Fifi, Miss Wiyaryi, and Nono said their farewells one by one, lastly it was Lady Ringrande's turn.

"Rin, you were a stinking shitty noble when we first met--"

Oy, oy, Hero, what are you saying.

--But now you're someone irreplaceable who understands me most.
Reconcile with your little sister okay."

"Hayato, hayatohayatohayato."

Lady Ringrande hugs him tightly while sobbing.
Looks like she can't put it into words well.

"Arisa, are you fine without saying farewell?"

"Yes, I've said my farewell yesterday."

Arisa replied so when I checked on her.

And then, light falls from the sky.

"It seems there's a time limit for God Parion connecting worlds. I have to go now."

Hero's body floats and then it's begun to disappear.

Someone called "Hayato", and then the hero's followers start to call his name one after another.

We keep looking up at the sky where the hero who kept waving until the end has disappeared to.



"Satou, are you drinking?!"

"Yes, I'm drinking. However, it seems Lady Ringrande has already drunk a bit too much."

After seeing the hero off, I was invited to the meeting to remember him with his followers, but for some reason, I got to accompany Lady Ringrande drunken rambles after the meeting was over.

The drunken Lady Ringrande has been complaining with her arm around my neck since awhile ago.

I think it's problematic for a lady of a duchy house to drink liquor straight from the bottle.

"Honestly, even though a daring woman who would even jump off a cliff approached him, that blockhead didn't even give me a kiss!"

"Hayato-sama is a gentleman with superior ethics after all."

It seems Lady Ringrande met a honorable defeat at her approach yesterday.

"Good grief, a man should become a beast sometimes!"

"That's right, yielding oneself to passion is needed once in a while."

After replying positively, Lady Ringrande became quiet.

Looks like she drank herself to sleep.

I asked the the girls who were peeking at the door like a totem pole to put her in a bed.

"Fumu, this is unexpected."

"About the letters?"

I assent to Arisa who sits beside me, and drink the fruit water that Lulu brought.

The letters with markers are on the marker column in the Menu.
Their current location is [N-World Line, Planet Earth, Japan]. By the way,
the N part is a number with astronomical value.
Hero Hayato's name remains below the letter.

It appears Unique Skill works across worlds.

15-SS. The Melancholy of Dungeon Core

*

The new master is a strange human.

He tried to get out of the dungeon even though he's a Dungeon Master.

『Dungeon Master cannot leave the Labyrinth.』

After displaying that message, I activated the emergency Master summoning function to pull Master back to Master's room.

"It's nothing. I'm returning soon, so you can go back to the inn ahead."

The new master is talking with no one, there's some strange person among humans.

"How do I get out of the labyrinth?"

Master asked the question to me, the Dungeon Core.

Why is he trying to go outside when this place is the safest.

--Incomprehensible.

"Dungeon Master is forbidden from leaving the Labyrinth."

When I replied so, Master folds his arms and becomes lost in thought. Rather than thinking so hard about such an obvious thing, I wish Master comes up with one or two traps to deal with the labyrinth's invaders instead.

"What should I do to hand over the position of Dungeon Master?"

--Hand over?

I cannot understand Master's train of thought.
Can't humans think logically?

However, I have to answer Master's questions.
Because I am a thing that obeys Master.

"That's impossible. Only death will vacate the position of Dungeon Master."

Master frowns to hear my answer.
I heard him muttering "Very inflexible", in a low voice.

Handing over the position of Dungeon Master which is said to holds the almighty power equaling Gods, even if it's restricted inside the dungeon, is what surely is beyond expectations.

--Eh?

Master disappeared from the Master's Room.

--No.

He disappeared from the dungeon.

Where? Why? How?

I couldn't feel any reaction of magic power.
I'm confident that I absolutely wouldn't overlook the usage of teleportation of space magic which requires vast amount of magic power.

"Master!"

『Master!』

--Master!

Master won't reply even after I called him with voice, called him with message boards inside the labyrinth, and called him with thought wave.

It's not like he's been annihilated, leaving a vacant post behind, yet my Master has disappeared.

I'll let the monsters outside the labyrinth to search--No.

I must prioritize Master's orders.

Letting the monsters go outside is impossible.

What should I do. I have to search for Master. Where's Master. What should I do. Master, Master, Master.

It seems I've hanged because my thought was going around in circles. I might have self-destruct if I didn't reset the safety circuit of Dungeon Core.

It has been 1000 hours since Master's disappearance.

Since he's added monsters and traps on the subsystem, explorers can't get to here.

According to the log, the unit led by a long-earkin woman had invaded the lower layer nearby many times, but they were caught in the traps installed by Master and forced to retreat.

--I was protected by Master.

I feel a certain bond in my heart from that fact.

--That's right.

If Master won't come back, I'll go look for him myself.

With my right as Dungeon Master, I create a homonculus for exploration and transcript my thought onto it.

--My body is heavy."

"You're just not familiar with muscles. It should feel lighter soon."

The path is open inside the dungeon, so the homonculus's current state is transmitted to me.

"Go. Core Two."

"Okay, Original."

I send the probe homonculus--Core Two to the entrance of the labyrinth. With the search power of Core Two, it should find the lost kid Master who's wandering around aimlessly outside the labyrinth immediately.

In order to perform maintenance on my thought circuit, I entered into suspend mode.

I decided to dream about my reunion with Master inside the thing called sleep by people.

--Master, please come back soon.

15-18. Intermission

*

Satou's here. I've never been able to match a quick-witted person. There really are people who embody the saying, "to understand everything from only one part."



"M-Master! Y-you won't secretly go home will you?"

"Yea, of course."

Arisa tightly grasped my hand and asked, I replied her immediately.

"Even if I were to go back to my hometown, I'd bring everyone along to sightsee the earth when that happened."

I'm sure that they'll be delighted to see Tokyo's skyscrapers and the subculture-overflowing Akiharaba.

"Y-you will, won't you."

"Moreover, even though I know the coordinates thanks to Hayato and the letters, it's not like I can visit there with the advanced teleport magic immediately."

I tried to calculate it and it seemed, using normal magic, moving a few grams of object was the limit even after using the magic power contained in a divine gift holy sword.

Apparently, the distance between worlds is way too far.

Looks like it's difficult if it's not with Yuriko of Rumooku Kingdom's 『Power that Connects Worlds』 and God Parion's Hero summoning,

unique skills--that is, God's power.

I have a feeling that my Unit Arrangement can do it, but unfortunately that's not possible since there is no base point in Hayato's world.

If I knew that this would happen, I would have asked him to carry a folding doghouse and build it there.

I've got some tricks up my sleeves if the problem is just the amount of magic power needed, so I'll be seriously going to research it once things have calmed down with the matters regarding Weasel Empire and Saga Empire.

I have a promise to visit the hero summoning magic circle in Saga Empire after all.



"Viscount Satou. Please come see me anytime you're in Saga Empire. I will fulfill the promise then."

"Yes, I'll be asking your help once I get back from Shiga Kingdom."

We're saying goodbyes to the hero's followers in front of the sub-dimensional ship Jules Verne.

Come to think of it, the other hero's followers besides Princess Maryest have also stopped calling me with my house name, Pendragon.

Did I do something to touch their heartstrings during the celebration the day before yesterday and the remembrance meeting of the hero yesterday?

"Satou-sama, please visit me if you have another good liquor okay."

"Yes, if I come across one that'll suit Loreiya-sama's taste, definitely."

I made such a promise with Miss Loreiya.

"Fifi and I will go on a journey to improve our skills once we get back to Saga Empire, have a match with us when we visit Shiga Kingdom 'kay."

"Un, have a match with me too. I never thought that there would be someone else besides Hayato and Rusus that could move like that against the demon lord."

Rusus and Fifi grinned and told me that.

I'll ask Tama and Pochi to be their sparring partners when that time comes.

"Satou, if you like to tour places, you should go to the earkin sanctuary in Saga Empire. It's possible for earkin to mate with humans so they surely will welcome the strong Satou."

Lady Wiyaryi appeared in front of me next.

I do have some interests in earkin but since it looks like I'll be treated like a breeding horse, I'm hesitating.

"See you Satou. I'll be visiting Shiga Kingdom as a secret agent."

"No no, please visit us normally. We'll welcome you."

Seina the scout made that disturbing remark.

"Satou-dono, we wish to express our gratitude for your cooperation. A letter from his majesty Saga Empire's Emperor should arrive at Shiga Kingdom at a later time. The content is probably in regard to medal conferment and honorary nobility ennoblement. Putting aside the ennoblement, the medal should be matching with us, so I'll be happy if you receive it."

And lastly, secretary Nono did a business-like report.

For some reason, her cheeks were flushed at the [Matching] part, so

Arisa's and Mia's, the impregnable fortress combo, eyebrows were raised. It was a complete misunderstanding, I'd love to plea for my innocence.

After seeing off the silver ship disappeared into the dimensional rift, our sailing ship left the Weasel Empire.

And then five days later, I visited Dejima Island.
As Kuro this time.



"I am Kuro, Hero Nanashi's follower. My gratitude for this chance to meet your excellency crown prince."

This place is the audience hall of the administrator building in Dejima Island.

The slender weaselkin crown prince is sitting on the throne in front of me.

"Level 50 huh. Your level is low for a hero's attendant."

"Please excuse me. My role is merely for transportation and negotiation."

I lightly brushed off the crown prince's provocation.

Originally, I had no plan to meet the crown prince as Kuro even thought I was going to make a courtesy visit as Satou.

Then why am doing this? that is because I'm asking the weaselkin merchant to plan a meeting between me and the weasel emperor through the crown prince, so I've to meet him once at least.

"--Science."

The crown prince muttered.

"Hmph, your complexion doesn't change even a bit huh. Do you know that anyone leaving the empire's mainland through Rete city will have to undergo memory deletion?"

"Memory deletion? Is it mind magic?"

"Nah, it's a Unique Skill by the purple hair fellows."

Purple hair--reincarnated people like Arisa huh.

"And?"

"There's no meaning in meeting the emperor if your memory gets deleted right? I'll help you smuggle through the place to prevent the memory deletion if you help me."

This dealing isn't particularly needed since I can get out instantly with Unit Arrangement, but I'm interested in the crown prince's objective for doing this.

"Let me hear your request."

"Dejima Island is going to secede from the empire. I want Shiga Kingdom to back us."

Independence huh--however.

"There is no meaning in having the backing of the far away Shiga Kingdom right? If the empire attacked, it'd be destroyed before reinforcements from Shiga Kingdom came."

"That worry is needless. The empire will be destroyed sooner or later. In order to not get destroyed ourselves by proxy when that happens, we're gaining independence. The parishes on the outer edges of the empire should be moving behind the scenes too, but there is no problem in leaving them alone because those guys are all pious believers."

It appears that the crown prince is aware that the Weasel Empire is in

precarious situation where it could garner the Gods' wrath.

Looks like he wants Shiga Kingdom's backing for providing supply and a place for refugees to flee when Dejima Island becomes uninhabitable.

"You don't think that they will avoid destruction?"

"The emperor's will is firm. From the beginning, he's been boasting that the Gods' intervention is included in his plan."

The crown prince replied my question as if spitting out.

"Does the emperor have the mean to oppose the Gods?"

"I asked him the same question, but he just laughed it out without answering back."

The crown prince looks displeased, but then his expression seems like he remembers something and he opens his mouth.

"That reminds me, the bald tactician muttered arrogantly, 『It is something that anyone knows, therefore no one arrives at the answer.』. I don't want to show off a reckless remark of a guy who acted as if he was a sage, but I'll tell you that one thing at least."

"I see, thank you for your kindness."

For some reason he laughs scornfully even though I thanked him honestly.

"Show that gratitude with acts instead."

"The matter about backing huh. I do not mind, but your fall might come sooner than Weasel Empire's ruin you know?"

I have no intention to intervene in a war between Weasel Empire and Dejima Island's independence.

"If something were to fall, that's only going to be this head. This is

something that needs to be done to preserve weaselkin blood and cultures."

"Very well, I will talk to Shiga King about it."

After I said that, the crown prince who was bending his body forwards lets himself sunk into the throne satisfyingly.

"Well then Hero Nanashi, I will be waiting for good news."

"You're mistaken, I'm--"

"Hmph, such a poor acting, if you're going to pretend to be a subordinate, don't give an immediate answer to a matter that exceeds your authority."

Oops, I didn't put too much thought on that part.



Now then, about the matter just now, I brought Hikaru with me to meet the king, but unexpectedly, he easily agreed to it even before Hikaru could support me.

Of course it's not unconditional.

We asked them to stop the production and research of forbidden medicines like the [Reborn Seed] used in the terror activities at Shiga Kingdom, and several other demands in order to silence the lineage nobles who don't like demi-humans.

At first we used pigeon carriers to fly about both countries, but since it was troublesome, I brought the crown prince to Shiga Capital to negotiate directly.

"Then let use enter the 『Yamato Treaty』 here."

Thus, one month after my meeting with the crown prince, Dejima Island gained Independence, and the treaty for Shiga Kingdom to be the backer was enacted.

During that period, a thank you letter and mountains of treasures from Saga Empire addressed to Viscount Pendragon who participated in the demon lord subjugation arrived, and the people in the royal castle were in uproar, but since as Satou himself was currently cruising in my airship, I didn't get involved in the uproar.

I pray that it'll be reduced into a lull before Satou arrives in Shiga Kingdom in half a month time.

Hikaru is attending every meeting while also serving as Shiga King's guard, so I can go far away at peace.

The destination is--.



"Satou-kun, is that Saga Empire's old capital!"

"Yes, that's right."

I'm visiting Saga Empire with Earl Muno.

The ones traveling with me this time are Earl Muno, Lady Karina, Lady Soruna, and Lady Soruna's fiancée who has just been elevated to peerage recently, Honorary Chevalier Hauto, and also Tama and Pochi whom are Earl Muno's favorites.

The next Earl Muno, Orion-kun was also eager to go, but Consul Nina stopped him saying that it wouldn't be good for both the earl and the next earl to leave the country at once, so he tearfully gave it up.

I'll buy him some souvenirs in the old capital.

In addition, I also invited Lady Ringrande and Sera whom I accidentally met, but she curtly declined.

Looks like it'll be a while before they can reconcile.

Further, the hero summoning magic circle is not located in the current capital, but this old capital that's governed by a duke.

Besides our airship, there are three large airships anchored in the airport of the old capital.

The number of populace is larger than Shiga Kingdom's Duchy Capital's but less than the Royal Capital's, the temperature is low all year round so there's a lot of people wearing warm clothing.

Many are black haired, and I see Japanese-like flat faces here and there.

"It's slightly chilly isn't it."

"Soruna, you should put this on."

"Thank you, Hauto."

Lady Karina is enviously looking that exchange between Lady Soruna and Hauto.

Lady Karina's clothes are equipped with all-weather air conditioner, so she has no need of a jacket in this degree of coldness.

"Cold~?"

"This much is nothing nanodesu."

"Tama-kun and Pochi-kun are really strong against cold."

Earl Munro praised Tama and Pochi while trembling in cold.

"Earl-sama, please wear this coat."

"Ah, Satou-kun, thank you."

I saw Lady Karina biting her finger in frustration in the corner of my view.
What are you doing getting jealous of your own father.

"Satou, have I kept you waiting?"

"Not at all, we've just arrived just now."

We got on a luxurious carriage after Princess Maryest's who came to meet us, heading toward the [Hero's Hill] at the old capital's outskirts.

The other hero's followers are in great demands to attend parties with the nobles in the imperial capital.

There's a building made of white stones on top of the hill with unusually good views.

It looks like a Greek historic temple with only pillars ceiling and no wall.

"OOOOOOOOO! S-so this is the sacred place where heroes-sama are summoned for generations!"

"Y-yes, that's right."

Princess Maryest was taken aback by Earl Muno's high tension.

Both Lady Karina and Lady Soruna are also looking around the sacred place with glimmering eyes, though not as bad as Earl Muno.

The day will end if I wait for the three to calm down, so after a while I urge them to advance and enter building.

"Your Highness Maryest, are they Earl Muno and Viscount Pendragon?"

"Yes, they are. He contributed in the fight with demon lord so much I wouldn't be able to speak it all. Don't be rude with him alright."

"If that's what Hero-sama has promised, then it cannot be helped."

And elderly Parion Temple head spoke with Princess Maryest in business-like manners.

Both of them don't seem to get along well.

"Then, over here please."

Following after the temple head who released the barrier, we entered the temple.

--Ooh, this is amazing.

It looks like a common temple at a glance, but when I activate Magic Seer, complex engraved magic circles are laminated not only on the floors but also on the ceilings and pillars.

Each magic circles interact with one another, they're quite artistic and educative.

I've noticed after reading the magic circles that it seems the underground of [Hero's Hill] is a gigantic magic device that accumulates magic power. The reason why the atmospheric temperature of the old capital is low must be because the magic power flowing in the earth's vein is absorbed by this magic device instead of the City Core.

"Are you satisfied now?"

I only noticed that I had been looking at the temple for quite a long time after the temple head call out.

"Yes, thank you very much. I had shamefully lost myself due to the mystical atmosphere."

I evaded the temple head's eyes that were full of suspicious with the help of Deception skill.

I've completely traced the magic circles here including the magic device hidden underground, so I can reproduce them as much as I like.

It would likely end up connecting with God Parion if I used it as is, so it needs several modifications it seems.

"Temple head! Meiko-sama is--"

"W-we have guests right now."

A miko rushed in when were about to leave the temple and made an obvious verbal slip.

After searching the obviously Japanese name, I see a new hero called [Meiko Kaname] is currently strolling the old capital.

She's carelessly not hiding her Unique Skills, her information is wide open to see.

She has four Unique Skills, [Strongest Katana (Nothing cannot be Cut)], [Unrivaed Mobility (Cannot be hit)], [Infinite Arsenal (Inexhaustible Swords)], and [Foresight].

I think she's just been summoned, yet her level is already 60, higher than Hero Hayato's initial level at 50.

"Satou, let's go."

"Your highness Princess--"

"I know."

Princess Maryest replied the temple head who was going to tell her to keep it a secret as if it was a matter of course and then she escorted us out of the temple.

The thing about Hero Meiko is probably a secret.

"I'm very sorry, but I have to go back to the Imperial Capital now."

"No no, we're sorry for troubling you in such a busy time."

I thanked Princess Maryest who really looked like she was sorry about it, and then we parted ways with her at the old capital's airport.



"Then, let's go tour the castle town."

I strolled the old capital with the Earl Munro family, and went around the ramen shop and Japanese sweets cafés that the heroes in the past visited. Next, we purchased hero's temple models and hero figurines as souvenirs.

"Mou! Why are all of them Japanese sweets and preserved sweets that are too sickeningly sweet! There's no cute cakes or parfaits anywhere!"

When I turn around at the voice, there's a 14 year old girl with an impertinent look on her face.

There's a handsome bespectacled priest as her guard.
His disposition looks weak somehow.

"I'm sorry, Meiko-sama. It seems that there is this cake called 『Lulu's Cake』 in Shiga Kingdom however."

"Lulu? That sounds like a cold medicine. Well fine, go buy it."

"Eh?"

"I'm saying that you go buy it. Don't make me say it twice."

She's quite unreasonable.

She's a girl from roughly the same hometown as me, but this time I shouldn't get involved and ignore her.

The girls should be able to live in this country splendidly.

"Hey! The black hair over there!"

Yet, somehow the girl is in front of me.
Looks like she used Flickering Movement.

"Me?"

"Yes, you! You're a local person right? Guide me to sweets shops. I'm starving for fresh cream!"

The girl is taking a threatening attitude, saying to guide her quickly.

"Me-Meiko-sama, you must not."

"Shut it!"

On the other hand, the attendant priest seemed to have inferred that we were nobles of a foreign country and desperately tried to change the girl's mind.

"Freesh creaam?"

"Pochi wants to eat sweets nodesu."

"Come to think of it, the cake we ate earlier was really delicious."

Lady Soruna mixed in with Tama and Pochi.

Not only the three, Earl Munro also said, "It's about time for having tea isn't it."

The good-natured Earl Munro seemed to sympathize with the girl who sought fresh cream.

"Is there one?!"

"Yes, there is. Let's go to that café over there."

"Meiko-sama, you mustn't be tricked! That café does serve blue tea but it has exactly the same kind of sweets as the ones we saw before."

The girl glared at me as if saying that she wouldn't forgive me if I was lying.

"The shop doesn't have one, but we have cakes in this bag. We can just pay the shop for bringing it inside."

"Really? Then let's go."

With the girl's quick decision, we enter the café with the calm atmosphere.

The bespectacled priest appeared to be a regular here, he immediately asked for a private room.

"Hee, that looks really good."

The girl said that arrogantly in front of the cut Lulu Cake. However, contrary to her tone, her eyes are sparkling brightly.

"Wha! What's this it's way too tasty."

"Delishlish~?"

"Lulu's cake is delicious alright nodesu."

While watching over the children joyfully eating the cake, I slowly drink the blue tea.

Not only Lady Soruna and Lady Karina, Earl Muno is also fond of sweets, they've been savoring the cake absentmindedly.

"That was delicious~ Was that Lulu Cake?"

"Ofcour~se"

"Master made it nodesu."

Tama and Pochi boastfully replied the girl who praised the cake she had eaten.

"You're a hero's follower from now on! Follow me as a chief."

"I'm sorry but--"

A silver haired man wearing important-looking priest clothes rushed in before I could answer.

"Lawrence! Get Meiko-sama back to the temple! Didn't I tell you not to let her out since that Sir Pendragon was coming today!"

"W-Warren-sama!"

Well now? Why do they want to prevent me from meeting the new hero? Seeing me, Priest Warren's face becomes pale.

"Nice to meet you, my name is Viscount Satou Pendragon."

"S-sir Pendragon?! W-why is the Demon Lord Slayer with Meiko-sama?!"

What an awful alias.

Perhaps [Demon Lord Slayer] is a praise in this world?

"Demon Lord Slayer? That Shiga Hero who defeated the demon lord together with the previous hero?"

"Me, a Hero? Perhaps, you're mistaking me with Hero Nanashi-sama of Shiga Kingdom?"

I replied Meiko's question with another question to dodge it.

"Meiko-sama, this Sir Pendragon is--"

The silver haired priest is whispering into Hero's Meiko ear.

The content of his talk was generally not wrong, but by no means could I agree with it.

Thus, I try to talk to her in order to reach a mutual understanding before the misunderstanding goes deeper.

"Meiko-sama--"

"D-don't come close! You sexual fiend!"

The frightened Hero Meiko jumped to the corner of the room.
Still, sexual fiend is cruel.

I could see the bespectacled priest desperately apologizing in the corner of my view, but such a thing can't heal my wounded heart.

"It's a misunderstanding--"

"You're served by more than 10 women, and sleep together with women from primary school age to adults everyday right!"

"That's the truth, however--"

"I don't want to hear it, I don't want to hear it!"

She closed both her ears and shook her head.

"Sir Pendragon, since Meiko-sama doesn't feel too well, please excuse us."

"P-please wait, Head Miko-sama!"

The silver haired priest held Hero Meiko's shoulder and rushed out.

The bespectacled priest called him Head Miko, but the silver haired priest's gender is undoubtedly male.

It's questionably strange, but let's ignore it since I'm not particularly interested.

"Vi-Viscount-sama--"

The chief of this shop asked to sample the cake with a desperate expression on his face.

"You don't want the recipe instead?"

The chef shook his head with a quiet expression.

"That will be too shameless of me. I am also walking the path of a cook. Once I eat it, I will arrive at that taste someday."

This person said some amazing things.

"Alright then, then I'll put out several kinds of sweets that will likely suit her taste."

Since it sounded a bit fun, I put out several cakes and Castella on the table.

Even Tama and Pochi's eyes are glittering.

I'm going to treat you two to Saga Empire's meat full course after this so right now, bear with it okay.

After encouraging the chef, we went on a meat dishes tour.

Of course, it goes without saying that I reproduced the meat dishes we ate in the tour for the girls who were staying behind.

Now then, now that I've recharged my batteries, it's about time to depart to Weasel Empire's Capital as Kuro.

15-19. Weasel Empire, at the Imperial Capital

*

Satou's here. It's said that news of bad deed travel quickly, but the true bad deed is concealed deeply and progressed quietly.



"Mast--Kuro-sama, the city has come into view."

As Liza is reporting in, I lean my body at the window to check.

I'm heading to Rete city in Weasel Empire as Kuro, accompanied by Liza, Zena-san and a female executive cadet of Echigoya Firm.

Liza and Zena-san are wearing Echigoya Firm's uniforms, and equipped with mirror geass to cope with the emperor's geass.

Further, the reason why the cadet is with us is to take on a certain dangerous task.

Originally, I should have been the one who would be doing that, but since the executives of Echigoya Firm and the girls in the solitary island palace were against it, this girl who volunteered first undertook the job instead. Even though I've prepared more than enough safety measures, I can't say for certain that it'll be safe, so I'm thinking of fulfilling one of the girl's wishes once this job is over.

"Quite a big city."

"Hmph, you Shiga Kingdom lot might not believe it, but that's not our Imperial Capital. Every city of our empire is as big and populous as the

capital of Shiga Kingdom."

The one who quickly picked up my muttering and boasted was the owner of this airship, Lady Liedill, the temple knight of Weasel Empire.

In accordance to the crown prince's scheme, it seems that she didn't know that the demon lord had been defeated until recently and kept loitering around the labyrinth after her treatment, until today.

Due to that, her level has increased by one, and her escort knights have also leveled up although there are slightly fewer of them now.

She's currently acting as my guard and carrying a letter from the crown prince to the emperor.

"Are we descending?"

"We're changing our ride in that Rete city."

When I sensed the floating feeling and muttered, Lady Liedill kindly told me the reason.

She's probably bored with the air travel too.



"You're slow!"

"Sorry, we needed to prepare for a bit."

After finishing the preparation, we got out of the waiting room in Rete city, and made Lady Liedill who got tired of waiting angry.

"The immigration check room is over here."

"It's emptier than I expected."

"Our country has been closed. Normally there are only several people, 10

at most."

We followed Lady Liedill and met a purple-haired girl surrounded by many guards.

There's a transparent magic wall between her and us, I think it can easily defend against normal mid-level magic.

The girl is a reincarnated person, her name is Louise. It's an unusual name for a Japanese, but it's not like a reincarnated person must always be Japanese--or maybe her parents simply loved light novels.

Her skills are hidden, I can't see it. Her level is 34, she's a cat ear-kin.

The twitching ears are cute.

"Please sit down on that chair."

The girl who said that with downcast eyes looked at me with upturned eyes and opened them wide.

『A-Alex that actor? But, but, his hair is white, I guess not?』

The muttering girl is staring at and appraising me.

I don't know the name Alex but he must be a foreign actor whose face is similar to Kuro.

"I don't mind if it's your job, but appraising people out of curiosity is not a good manner you know."

When I said that while playing innocent of my own doing, the girl cowered as if she was scolded and muttered, "I'm sorry".

It looks like this girl is a honest type.

"Leaving that aside, finish the immigration check thing."

"Y-yes!"

The girl's guards are frowning in displeasure at my arrogant attitude, but I'm not going to bother myself with background characters.

"If you don't have any objection to my words, please say 『I swear』."

After saying that, the girl is wrapped in purple phosphoresce. She probably used a Unique Skill.

"Your memories in Weasel Empire, starting from the moment you enter this room, will be lost once you leave Weasel Empire."

After the girl said that in a tone like she was used to it, she fell silent. She's probably waiting for us to say, "I swear".

『I swear.』

When the executive cadet said that clearly, a coronet made of purple light appeared on her head for an instant and then disappeared. That was probably the mark of the Unique Skill's activation.

Now then, let's inspect it.

I move the executive cadet away from the room to Echigoya Firm with Unit Arrangement.

"S-she disappeared?!"

The girl was surprised to see the executive cadet disappeared, and reacting to that, her guards and Lady Liedill touched their sword's handles.

"Do not panic."

I wave one of my hands, and while maintaining that posture, I cut off the remote possession mode from the Kuro doll which had changed place with me in the waiting room earlier and return my consciousness to my real body at Echigoya Firm.

The scene changes from the immigration check room I saw as Kuro doll earlier to the Echigoya Room which I'm seeing as myself.

"How is your memories?"

I check the executive cadet whose consciousness has gone back from the executive cadet doll to her real body.

"The information on the log shows that it's interrupted on the arrival at Rete city."

"I-I can remember the time when I entered the immigration room."

I see, in remote possession mode, the effect is only valid for the doll.

"Thank you for your cooperation. I'll be getting back to my mission, for your achievement this time you'll get paid vacations and special bonus so you should take some rest today."

"Y-yes! Kuro-sama!"

When I rewarded her, the executive cadet saluted upright.

She seems to be quite nervous so I lightly wave my hand to prompt her to leave and I get back to the remote possession mode of the Kuro doll in Weasel Empire.

And then, after a slight time lag, my view returned back to the immigration room in Rete city.

I show the magic tool furnished with green and red gems in my hand.

"The green one is shining. Looks like my subordinate who has gone back to our country is fine."

"Wha! Are you doubting me?!"

After I said that, Miss Louise stood up and got outraged as if it was unthinkable.

"You think I will unconditionally believe someone I just met."

"T-that's true but...."

Miss Louise faltered to hear me.

Her guards unanimously reproached me, but dealing with them will be troublesome so I ignore them.

"Kuro-dono, please hand over that magic tool. If you have any other communication magic tools, please leave them here."

"This is an antenna only tool for receiving signal--though you won't believe that. I swear that I don't have any other communication magic tool with me."

A man who seems to be Miss Louise's aide enters the room and takes the magic tool away from me.

He checks whether I'm lying with his colleagues on the other side of the wall and then goes back to his room.

"By the way, is the vow still in effect? If it is, do we take one now?"

"Y-yes. Please do."

After Miss Louise nodded, we said, "I swear" and finished the ritual. Needless to say, since Liza and Zena-san are equipped with substitute dolls too, there's no problem.

"U-um...."

"What is it? Is there another ritual?"

Miss Louise called me hesitatingly when I was about to go out of the room as urged by Lady Liedill.

"...Your name, um."

"Kuro."

The girl seems to like this foreign actor's face.

"Ku-Kuro? Are you Japanese--"

"I was named by the master of the Black Dragon Mountains. My lord, Nanashi-sama also asked the same question when he heard the name."

"Is, that so."

The girl who muttered weakly as I told her the history behind the name seemed disappointed for some reason.

I wonder what did she expect?

"--Are you living happily here?"

"Y-yes. Not only that there's zero overtime, half of the month are even holidays, and the people around me care for me kindly."

The girl who was speechless by my question answered honestly. Looking at her condition, looks like it's just as she's said.

Then I don't have to go out of my way to take care of her.

"I see, if you're ever troubled with works, go visit Echigoya Firm in Dejima Island."

Nevertheless, I think I'm allowed to say that much.



"We're taking an airplane heading to the imperial capital's airport from here."

"Is it not an airships?"

Zena-san asked back Lady Liedill.

Zena-san and Liza are wearing the translation rings, so they can perfectly understand the people of the Weasel Empire mutually.

"That's right. Airplanes are faster."

Lady Liedill boasted with a child-like expression.

A small 20-seater propeller plane is waiting at the airport we're guided to. Its shape is similar to the airplane I know.

Inside the plane, each seat is wide, so each side of the plane only holds eight seats.

The seat looks luxurious, this seems to be an airplane for VIPs.

Liza and Zena-san screamed weakly when the airplane took off.

I thought the two were afraid of flying in the sky, but it seemed they had their own reasons.

"It is similar to when I got on the back of the dragon, the sudden floating sensation is unpleasant isn't it."

I see, in Liza's case, she probably didn't feel the floating sensation since she jumped when we took off.

"I was anxious, I thought the airplane might fall."

It's very like Zena-san to worry about that.

She was probably anxious since we could see the airplane's wings rocking from the windows.

Even if the airplane falls, it should only end with a scratch with Zena-san's equipment, so it's a needless anxiety.

"Is that line a railroad?"

"That seems to be the case."

"That's the smoke car's road (ensharl) that connect cities which our Weasel Empire is proud of."

Lady Liedill boastfully corrected Liza's question.

I think the part where she doesn't question why we know about railroads makes her fail cute.

And then, Liza found that as we got close to the Imperial Capital.

"I wonder what is that?"

"It's big for a barrier pillar. Is it some kind of tower?"

"It's reflecting light like it's made from metal isn't it."

The thing that Liza found and made Zena-san puzzled is--.

"That's... The white tower of 『Brains』. It's been isolated away from the Imperial Capital since it's making some loud rumbling noises."

Lady Liedill said that with a displeased expression.

--Rocket?

It's too big to be a ballistic missile, or are they going to launch a man-made satellite?

It might really be a rocket tower though.

The airplane lowered its altitude during our conversation, and landed at an airport in the suburb of the Imperial Capital.

Unfortunately, I couldn't see the Imperial Capital due to the cloudy sky, but we're going to it anyway.

Liza and Zena-san crushing their seats' handrails during the descent were impressive.

I probably should use defensive magic when we're sitting on two or three seater.



"This is the capital city of our empire!"

The moment the smoke car we rode on came out of a tunnel to a high place that overlooked the Imperial Capital, Lady Liedill boasted again.

"T-this is Imperial Capital."

"T-there's a lot of very big buildings."

Liza and Zena-san were surprised.

There, I saw a majestic looking dome-shaped structure in the center of the crowded skyscrapers.

"What do you think! Our empire is great isn't it?"

"Is that dome the emperor's castle?"

"That's right."

Lady Liedill answered my question.

"The shape looks strange."

"Fufuhn, that shape was chosen not out of whim or sophism you know?"

Lady Liedill are looking down at us with an air of superiority.
She's probably waiting for me to ask her.

I inadvertently want to tease her after she's showing this much dumb cute behaviors.

"It's a precaution against attacks from the sky right? Or perhaps, it's also a solar generator?"

It seems both of my statements were correct, Lady Liedill fell silent while looking dissatisfied.

I might have been a bit childish.

The smoke car we rode on passed through the huge Imperial Capital gate and arrived at an imposing station.

Now then, as for the information of the Weasel Empire's Capital from the [All Map Exploration]--

The population is more than 300.000 people, the most numerous ones were not the weaselkin, but the ratkin and the rabbitkin, the weaselkin is only a third of the population. There are also humans but ratio is not so high.

Special mention for the fact that there's no slave.

Since the citizens are separated by class, from first to third class, there's a possibility that the third class citizens are treated like slaves though.

The average levels of the empire's citizens are 3 just like Shiga Kingdom's citizens, but the soldiers' average is high at 10 and the knights' at nearly 30.

Just as the rumor suggests, Temple Knights where Lady Liedill belongs to have 107 people that are higher than level 50. Ten of them are more than level 60, the knight leader and number two have reached level 70. If every one of them were deployed in the war against Makiwa Kingdom, it would probably have been over before we could intervene.

On the other hand, the court magicians' levels are not that high, the average is 40 besides two level 50.

Since half of the Temple Knights have magic skills, the court magicians' duty might be something other than battle.

Unfortunately, the emperor and the tactician Touya were not caught on the map.

They're probably lurking at a different map somewhere.

"Huh? Doesn't that face look familiar?"

"U~n, it looks like Alex, but isn't he a bit shorter?"

I could hear a conversation between a purple haired and a black haired women who were eating parfait in a parlor inside the station building. They seem to belong to the Weasel Empire's research institution, [Brains]. The purple haired girl is a reincarnated person, and the black haired girl has an obviously Japanese face.

I searched again since I forgot to check it. There are more than 10 reincarnated people at various ages inside the Imperial Capital, and there's a lot of people with Japanese names yet without Unique Skill like the black haired girl in front of me who belong to [Brains].

It appears the [Japanese Summoning] experiment performed by Princess Menea's home country, Rumooku Kingdom, is continued by the Weasel Empire.

It looks like my job in Weasel Empire has increased by one.

It helps that the women in the parlor look happy.

◇Extra◇

--Guhehehe, I'm not Arisa-chan if I miss a good opportunity like this.

Walking on tiptoe, I go from Solitary Island Palace to Echigoya Firm.

"Elterina."

"Tifa please. Let go of that hand."

When I got to Echigoya Firm, a yuri-yuri conversation was happening in front of Master.

Tifaliza, the transcendental western-style beauty is tightly grasping the manager Elterina's hand that's reaching toward Master's cheek, holding her back.

Come to think of it, currently, Tifaliza is the only one that remains a slave of Master.

It feels like she has a special treatment somehow, vexing.

"I just want to touch those soft cheeks a little bit."

Yep yep, I can sympathize with El-cchi.

Poking those cheeks feels really good.

Master displeasedly brushing my hand is very cute, my delusion goes wild just by that reaction alone.

"Doing such a thing when the other party is unconscious is cowardly."

Tifaliza is too serious.

But but, you can't deceive Arisa-chan's eyes.

That's the face of her persuading herself while admonishing El-cchi.

Alright then, Arisa the evangelist will show her true ability here.

"I've heard it! You two!"

"A-Arisa-san."

"Another problem child...."

Oh you Tifaliza, you're so cold to me.

And she was really obedient when I taught her to do double-entry bookkeeping in three days.

"Tifaliza's right, poking Master's cheeks is the best when he's conscious!"

Tifaliza looks confused to hear me somehow.

"When he's unconscious, it's this!"

After saying that, I put my head on the lap of Master who's sitting on the sofa.

--Bliss!

I'd like for those slender fingers to gently brush my hair if possible, but I'll bear with it.

I want to caress his lap, but I restrain myself since the two's coiling stares are heavy.

"A-Arisa-san, me to...."

After having thoroughly enjoyed myself enough, I change place with

Elterina who entreated.

Tifaliza is only looking with wistful expression, she doesn't stop or ask for it.

She sure is a child with disadvantageous nature.

Let Arisa-chan pitch in and help you here!

"Time to change."

"Al-already?"

"That's right, look at the line, the line!"

Saying that, I push aside the reluctant Elterina from Master's lap.

"You're next."

"I-I'm... um"

Tifaliza whose whole face is red looks down while fidgeting.

What is this cute creature.

"What are you saying now, after overlooking me and Elterina, you're already an accomplice you know?"

Hearing me, Tifaliza looks shocked.

"Eat poison till the plate, so they say, right."

I whisper so in Tifaliza's ear.

My face must totally look like a villain right now.

"Come on come on, this la~p is so~ft y'know~"

Succumbing to the temptation, Tifaliza lies down on Master's lap.

"How is it?"

"Err, um.... It feels nice."

Awright! I got me [Feels nice]!!

Tifaliza's silver hair is gently brushed as I laugh guhehe.

--He?"

There, Master who's opened his eyes is kindly looking at Tifaliza.

"U-um, Kuro-sama, t-this is."

"Un, I understand, it's alright."

Master tenderly spoke to Tifaliza who was in fluster on his lap.

"The culprit is Arisa right?"

--Not good, I'm exposed.

Adieu, Master!

I told so in my heart and tried to teleport away but my magic was neutralized.

I also tried to escape by running but the gate to the Solitary Island Palace had been closed.

"You understand right, Arisa?"

"I-it's my first time. Be gentle okay?"

Master ignored me trying to soften the mood, and flicked my forehead to hard lump as the penalty.

It was super painful, but since I got to satisfy myself with lap pillow after a

long time, this day was a good day.

15-20. The Empire's Subjects

*

Satou's here. Why do we become unconditionally friendly with people from the same country when we met them abroad? Is it because you feel a sense of security when you converse using the same language?



"It's a really lively city."

"Yes, I can't get tired of seeing the attires of the people walking on the street."

Just as Zena-san and Liza-san have said, there's a lot of people walking on the Weasel Empire's capital street wearing showy clothes.

Of course, the working class people are wearing plain clothes, but their health doesn't seem bad.

"We've arrived, you'll be staying in this mansion while waiting for the audience with His Majesty."

Lady Liedill guided us to the Weasel Empire's guest house.

According to the map, it's close to the dormitory where the reincarnated and transported people are living, this is just right.

When our carriage entered the entrance, the gatekeepers who noticed us shouted at our arrival.

Apparently, Lady Liedill didn't tell them in advance.

A weaselkin wearing officer clothing came out behind the servants who had lined up in a hurry.

"Liedill-sama, are the people over there the emissaries of Shiga Kingdom?"

--Why is an official of domestic bureau like you here?"

Lady Liedill is openly taking a hostile attitude at the mild-mannered weaselkin.

According to AR reading, he also has a position in the internal inspection department besides the domestic bureau.

That explains why his level is high at 39 with scout-type skills despite being an official.

"I will be attending them from here on. I've been entrusted with the message from Leader-dono to Liedill-sama, 『Come to the Temple Knights ASAP』."

"F-from Leader--"

Lady Liedill's face turns pale hearing that.

Don't tell me, did she come to Dejima Island on an airship without an order from above?

"It cannot be helped. I will entrust the matter here to you. Kuro-sama, please tell me about Sir Pendragon as you promised later. Don't forget it okay!"

Lady Liedill ran off while leaving those words behind.

I should have told her enough about Satou's history in our journey already, did she have more to ask?

Zena-san looks like she wants to say something, but asking that here would be bad so I'll leave it for later.

"Nice to meet you, Emissary-dono. My name is Dolg of the Weasel Empire's domestic bureau."

"I'm Kuro, an emissary of Shiga Kingdom. I want to hear the schedule for

our audience with the emperor."

I asked the official while consciously acting as Kuro.

"The audience will be held in three days. Until then, please relax in this guesthouse and freely spend your time strolling the capital. We will provide you with a bodyguard who knows the capital well, so please ask him if you need a guide."

Fumu, bodyguard huh--looking at the search result on the map, the capable people who are as skilled as the official before us are concealing themselves, so I think the bodyguards are merely decoys.

"Thank you for your kindness."

After saying that, we entered the provided room.
It seems the bodyguard will come later to greet us.

I set up a barrier for counterespionage once it's just us.

"Alright, now the people outside won't be able to hear us--"

I turn toward Zena-san after saying that.

--U-um?"

"Didn't you want to talk about something earlier?"

Zena-san's face became bright red after I asked her that.

--Huh?

It wasn't because she felt something suspicious with Lady Liedill?

"I'll get some tea."

Liza who perceived the mood stood up and went to a teapot in the corner of the room.

That teapot appears to be a kind of magic tool.

"Um, er... I was jealous."

--Jealous?

"I thought maybe Liedill-san loves Satou-san."

"That shouldn't be the case. Since Liedill-san is a martial artist. There is no mistake that she was gathering intelligence for a rematch."

"T-that's right isn't it!"

Thanks to the effort of the deception skill which I hadn't used for a long time, I successfully dispelled Zena-san's doubt.

Even though I said rematch, thinking again, I've never even fought once with Lady Liedill.

That girl must be a battle maniac who would want to fight with anyone strong.

There is no chance of me meeting her again as Satou though, so it doesn't matter.



"Kuro-sama, I am Zakuga Norouyn, I will be acting as your bodyguard."

"Norouyn, that means--"

"Yes, I wish to express my gratitude for saving my esteemed cousin-dono."

The male weaselkin who appeared as the bodyguard seemed to be the

cousin of the weaselkin merchant who facilitated this meeting with the emperor.

According to the AR reading, the weaselkin merchant's uncle who's in the senate appears to be his father.

"As a token of our appreciation, my father wishes to invite you to a banquet--"

Come to think of it, one of the special scientific vehicle captains said that his relative was a member of the senate.

I have to talk to them about the matter of prisoner exchange, but the mysterious dragon knight Outis has no diplomatic channel.

Let's push the matter to the crown prince on Dejima Island.
That able man must be able to handle it well.

The hyahhaa mercenaries who were hunting civilians have found employment first, perpetually at a Shiga Kingdom's coal pit.

I've no doubt that they will work hard for the sake of people from now on--compulsorily though.

--Kuro-sama?"

"Ah, sorry."

I was late to reply since I thought of unnecessary things.

"Then I will take your offer."

Thus it's decided that I will visit the head family of Norouyn in the first-class estate, bringing Liza and Zena-san who have dressed up.

By the way, Liza is wearing red chic dress and Zena-san is wearing cute azure dress.

Both look like normal dress outwardly, but their defensive power is equal to the early days golden armor.



"Uwaah, it's dazzling."

"What vulgar lighting befitting of weasels."

Zena-san is excited to see the luxurious mansion.
In contrast to her, Liza who hates weasels frowns.

The bodyguard who came with us had run inside to inform his father, the host of this party.

"Ah! It's Alex."

When I turned at the impudent voice, the two women I saw in the station were standing behind a reception desk-like table.
They're wearing bold clothes with open chest valleys unlike the other receptionists, so they're probably guests.

The black haired girl is pointing at me, while the purple haired girl is stiffened with a pale face.

"--Wait a minute, I can't see his."

"I can see him though?"

The purple haired girl muttered in panicked voice and caught the arm of the black haired girl who was going to rush out of the booth.

"Master?"

"Let me handle this."

I hold Liza back who's going to come forward with my hand.

I could hear Zena-san starting defensive magic chant in low voice. The thing that prevents her magic power from leaking out during the invocation is my handmade.

"N-not that! I'm saying that his status is invisible!"

"Eh? Wasn't Miko-cchi said that there's nothing your appraisal can't see 'cause it's through God."

"That's why I'm surprised! Call the guards!"

"Eh! Me?"

"Quickly!"

"Mou, you'll have to treat me giga serving of the station's parfait next time 'kay."

Urged by the purple haired girl, the black haired girl reluctantly moved. The difference between the temperamental purple haired girl and the 'my pace' black haired girl is extreme.

When I made a step forward, the purple haired girl's body got wrapped in purple light.

I don't know the details since she has Hide Skill on, but it's probably an activation of some kind of Unique Skill.

It's probably a kind of Unique Skill that will protect her together with the black haired girl.

"Do not be frightened--"

I walk toward the purple haired girl while taking off the [Thief God Harness] on my arm.

This [Thief God Harness] is like my [Mana Camouflage] as it can even prevent the divine gift [Status Check] reincarnated people have.

"--I'll let you see it, Tomiko."

"Don't call me Tomikoooooooooo!"

I said the girl's name as shown by the AR reading to ease her tension, yet she denied it out loud.

Looks like she has a complex about her name, I should have called her [Kunelia] like the black haired girl did earlier.

"Stop at once! My automatic counterattack <<Tit for Tat>> will retaliate any attack by twofold back at the opponent."

Tomiko who looked nervous explained her own ability like some mob character in a manga.

It's probably a diversion to prevent me from going at them.

"You shouldn't talk about your own Unique Skill to your opponent--"

I release [Lesser Spark] from my finger.

It's Tama and Pochi's favorite [crackle crackle] magic.

"Kya"

The lesser spark increased by twofold came back to me from the screaming Tomiko, but it vanished before me.

Looks like I was protected by the wind magic Zena-san invoked.

On the other hand, it seems Tomiko who bounced the attack got some damage, her beautiful hair looks bad due to the spark.

"--Since I'd be forced to deal with you like this then."

After saying that, I tell her, "I've made it so you can appraise me now, just look."

Tomiko appraises me while being cautious like a cat.

『Ah, I can see--huh? It's not Alex, Kuro? Reincarnated person--no, there's no Unique Skill.』

Speaking her thought out loud to herself in Japanese seems to be her habit.

『Are you a new transported person called by the emperor like Asuka?』

『I have no relation with the emperor. I come from outside the empire.』

I replied back the question in Japanese.

Tomiko's attitude immediately softened.

『--Outside? Like Nezu-san?』

『I'm sorry but I don't know anyone called Nezu.』

『I see--that's right isn't it. He was a reincarnated person, a ratkin from the north.』

The ratkin demon lord's face flashed in my mind, but it must be unrelated.

Some armed male guards rushed in.

They're brawny lionkin and tigerkin men.

"Kunelia-sama, is the white hair over there the suspicious person?"

"N-no. It was a misunderstanding!"

"--Misunderstanding?"

The lionkin who seems to be the captain conversed with Tomiko.

『Miko-cchi! I called the guards!』

『A-Asuka--』

Seeing the black haired girl behind the men, the purple hair muttered awkwardly.

Then, our bodyguard came back.

"What is happening here?"

"Y-young master.... There was a slight misinformation, this person is--"

"Anything wrong with this gentleman? He's the guest of honor today called by father do you know?"

Tomiko and the guards' face became pale after hearing the bodyguard. Apparently, offending a member of senate in this country is quite a dangerous thing to do.

"It was nothing. Forget about that, let's go now if you're done with the things there."

Nothing good would come leaving things in this situation so I urged the bodyguard to guide us to the host.



"So you're the emissary of Shiga Kigndom. Since you're an emissary, is it correct to assume that you're an earl or a duke?"

"Neither. I am an ordinary citizen."

Wonder if that shouldn't have been the case for an emissary?

While thinking that, I'm with a member of the weasel senate in a uselessly gaudy room.

Since it's only Kuro who's allowed to meet him, Liza and Zena-san are standing by in the waiting room.

"--Ordinary citizen? Yet you wish to meet His Majesty the emperor?"

"I am a follower of Hero Nanashi-sama. Shiga King and the crown prince have given me their recognitions, have you not heard it?"

"His Highness Crown Prince...."

This man calls the crown prince with [Highness] instead of [Majesty].
He's probably in the emperor's faction.

I tried to probe various things out of the senate member, but he shrewdly dodged all of it.

During this chance, I also tried to ask about the emperor and the tactician Touya.

--His Majesty is a great person. He has turned this once small country that had no choice but getting oppressed left and right by major powers into an empire in a single generation. An impossible task for ordinary men."

I wanted to ask about his personality, not achievements, but I couldn't get anything useful from him who adored the emperor.

On the other hand, as for the tactician Touya--.

"I do not fancy that bald tactician, but he is a capable man. His involvement in realizing the emperor's 『Rich Country Strong Army』 plan is big. I thought he was planning a rebellion when he established 『Brains』 and started to meddle with science, but that bald tactician's loyalty is genuine."

Wonder what he did to make this man think it's genuine?

An unexpected answer came out when I asked about it.

"He was the one who held back the rebellion of the foolish reincarnated person, Kazura's rebellion who was accompanied by the demon lord. He sacrificed his own body to protect His Majesty. After that, that guy has only an arm and an eye."

The name sounds familiar. The weasel demon lord's name should be

Kazura.

I didn't call him by name even once so I might be mistaken, I should check it.

It'd be annoying if there were still other demon lord out there.

"Are you talking about the rat demon lord and the weasel demon lord at Dejima Island?"

"--Weasel demon lord? The only demon lord that appeared should only be the rat demon lord from the north. The reincarnated weaselkin certainly did many barbaric experiments and research befitting to be called demon lord however...."

It seems the weasel demon lord had been evil ever since he was an ordinary person.

"Then, Hero Hayato has already dealt with them both at Dejima Island."

"Is that so.... Reincarnated person Kazura's death is deserved, but his ability will be missed. The science products from Jipan were highly prized among the empire's high class society, and he was also the driving force behind the empire's scientific progress...."

Despite all that, his behaviors were so bad they forced him into Dejima Island's labyrinth.

Recalling my conversations with the weasel demon lord, I understood what happened somehow.

"Father, please excuse my rudeness while you're in the middle of a talk--"

I wanted to talk a bit more, but since the banquet was about to start we went to the hall.

"Amazing--"

Zena-san was surprised when she saw the large hall for the banquet.

Very long tables are lined up in the banquet hall, and great variety of dishes, so many they look like they'll spill out, are placed on top of the tables.

At first I thought they were trying to show off the Weasel Empire's prosperity, but judging from the guests' reaction, such festivities seem to be an everyday happening.

Many of the dishes make use of oil and butter, reflecting the chandelier's light off them.

They truly look heavy on the stomach.

There are grapes and fruits placed on tall bowls between the dishes, they're probably the palate cleanser.

Lots of flower decoration too, but no one even bats an eyelid at them.

We're guided to the seats near the host while exposing ourselves to the inquisitive gazes of the guests.

"Somehow, everyone is looking at us."

"Gazes from weasel worth less than garbage."

Liza replied the anxious Zena-san by looking down at other people which was unusual for her.

Both of them are talking in Shiga Language, so no one around us should be able to catch it.

And the party began after the host's greeting.

"It's delicious isn't it."

"Yes, the dishes have no sin. Let us get tasting."

Oily meat dishes seem to be nothing for the young Zena-san and Liza.

I only took a mouthful of each for future references and enjoyed the rare liquor offered by a rabbitkin waiter.

--Eh?"

Chasing after Zena-san's line of sight, I saw a weaselkin vomiting over the decorative plants.

It seemed he was used to vomiting, he came back to his seat and resumed to eat as if it was natural after he wiped his mouth with a cloth given by a servant.

Apparently, it's common here to eat for the sake of eating and then continue to eat the dishes after vomiting the content of one's stomach. How do I say this, it's like the period of the ancient roman empire at its peak.

"How very like the gutless weaselkin. Throwing away the life of other creatures they received just like that."

Liza shakes her head as if saying there's no cure for them.

Come to think of it, Liza and Zena-san's stomachs aren't bulging even though they've been eating an amazing amount of food for a while.

"I'm glad that I've learned the Art of Eating in the solitary island palace."

"Yes, you can eat to your heart's content if you compress the food in your stomach."

--Art of Eating?

Come to think of it, I did feel that everyone had been eating a lot lately. I thought that their metabolism were just raised due to the increased STR and VIT from the level up for sure.

However, I feel that Tama and Pochi are still often downed with bulged

stomach even with this Art of Eating thing.

Don't tell me, they ate until their stomachs became round on top of compressing the content inside?

"Ooh! Is she going to challenge the 『Whole Roast Dragon』! That Shiga Kingdom's Lizardkin is a monster!"

"Nay nay. She probably simply doesn't know that once one challenged the 『Whole Roast Dragon』, one has to finish it alone."

Voices of surprise reached my ears.

Looks like Liza had begun eating the whole roast lizard on the center table.

It seems the strange unwritten law is the reason why no one put their hand on it.

"This is tasty."

Liza continues enjoying the whole roast without minding the noises around her.

Liza's meal scenery is really elegant thanks to the open manner lecture held in the solitary island palace.

"Damn it! It'd be a disgrace to the empire if we only look while doing nothing! Show them that Weasel Empire never gives up!"

The weaselkins swoop down on the whole roast on other tables with some strange sense of rivalry.

They said some cool lines, but it's ultimately a mere gluttony.

And surely they're no match against Liza eating meat--.

"S-she ate it all...."

"F-first time I saw it happened."

Shocked eyes and voices are directed at Liza.

However, Liza who's wiping her mouth with a handkerchief doesn't seem to notice it.

"Fuuh, I'm full."

"Zena-san, you're really a light eater."

"Here you go."

"Thank you, Sa-Kuro-sama."

While wryly smiling at Liza's words, I offered a fruit water to Zena-san.

"Eating the same dishes over and over again is getting tiring. Let's have some chicken next."

After muttering that, Liza asked a waiter for the whole roast bird.

Several Mr. and Mrs. who were eating greedily fainted after they saw that.

Lots of dishes are available after all, Zena-san and I are looking over Liza-san eating happily with warm eyes.



The courtyard is opened after the banquet for people to amuse themselves with dances and games.

Liza is surrounded by the food fighters, being praised somehow or other. Judging from what can be heard, it seems a lot of Liza fans were born after they saw her eating the whole roast earlier.

I asked Zena-san to be the stopper to prevent Liza from losing her temper

from dealing with the weaselkins.

As for me--.

"I see, so Nezu-san was exterminated."

"He was a kind person when he wasn't a demon lord."

--I'm gathering intelligence while drinking together with the reincarnated person Tomiko and the transported person, the black haired girl.

According to them, the rat demon lord was bound by the emperor's [Geass] and got imprisoned in the experimental institution.

It seems the rat demon lord regained his sanity after they extracted the miasma out of him, he was called [Nezu] and they befriended him.

"Scumzura got what he deserved though."

"He demanded our body for the latest issue of the journal and pushed down Neka-chan into the warehouse."

The weasel demon lord was also a villain here too huh.

I got enough information about the two demon lords, so I changed the topic to the emperor and the tactician Touya.

"Ah, sorry. I can't talk about the emperor."

"Same with me."

"Could I hear the reason?"

"Sorry, that's not possible too."

Judging from their attitudes, the information is probably banned by the weasel emperor's [Geass] skill.

"What about tactician Touya?"

"That one's fine. I know he's level 55, but skills and other things are

hidden like me so I don't know."

"We don't know his race or age either right?"

"Un, various numbers and terms I don't know floated if I tried to appraise him. Maybe he used an artifact from 『Brains』 they said."

"He's bald but handsome you see."

"If only he doesn't talk like an old man~"

I don't think they're lying, but I don't understand the point of hiding his age and race.

He's probably hiding the fact that he's long lived, but I don't think that's an important enough information to hide....

The ground shook while I was lost in thought.

"Guess it's about magnitude 2?"

"It's quite long isn't it."

"Sure there's a lot of them lately."

"It's strange you know, quakes should be few around here."

The two former Japanese are fine with the quake, but the people in the hall seem to be frightened by it, both the guests and the waiters are hiding under the tables.

"There's also rumors about monsters appearing in the slum and the underpasses, maybe it's some kind of omen?"

"As I thought, banishing people related to temples is--"

"Don't say stupid things. The temple people volunteered to go to the parishes in order to build God's gardens."

Hearing rumors about monsters, I tried searching the map thinking it might be something similar with the matter that happened in Shiga Capital, but there's no monster besides the food monsters like the one back then.

Some of the food monsters probably escaped and caused some uproars.

The edible monsters might be a secret to everyone but the people involved.

"Hey hey, why don't we slip out here and go to Miko-cchi's mansion?"

"Eh, my home?"

"I mean, mine's a dormitory--the wall's thin you see."

The black haired girl wrapped her arms around mine and said that suddenly.

It's not just my imagination, I can feel her amorous glance.

Thanks to Kuro's foreign actor's handsome face, looks like she wants a one-night stand.

I don't intend to have one with her, but this is quite a fresh experience.

"Miko-cchi's house is a mansion y'know! There's about 10 maids and sheep!" <TLN: Shitsuji=butler. Hitsuji=sheep.>

"That's common around here. Look at the top people of 『Brains』, they're living in huge mansions with servants numbering more than one digit right."

"Ahaha, Harem Section Chief and Seraglio Deputy Director are like that innit."

Those are some amazing nicknames.

They're probably surrounded by many women.

"Sorry but I have something to discuss with the senate member after this."

"Then come visit 『Brains』."

Fumu, not a bad invitation.

"I'll be coming if you're alright tomorrow."

"It's a promise!"

I exchanged pinky promise with the forceful black haired girl, and added the visit to the [Brains] in my schedule.

15-21. Brains

*

Satou's here. It's said that a genius and an idiot are two sides of the same coin, but since I've never met a genius in real life, I'm not sure about the authenticity of that saying. I think it's impossible to find a single genius among innumerable idiots though.



"It's a cuboid building without appeals isn't it."

"So this is the base of 『Brains』...."

Liza and Zena-san muttered while looking up at Brains's base.
It looks like a research institute or a business building.

Two Temple Knights are standing guard on the entrance while looking bored, they're glaring at us, or rather at the bodyguard.

The domestic bureau the bodyguard belongs to seems to not get along well with the Temple Knights.

"Ah! You came you came! Miko-cchi, Alex's here!"

The black haired girl whom I've gotten familiar with during the several days here is waving her arms while looking impatient at the the automatic glass door opening.

Three purple haired reincarnated people are behind the black haired girl. One of them is Tomiko who invited me here, while the other two seem to be the director and the vice director here according to AR reading.

"Hee, so he's the actor-san emissary of Shiga Kingdom."

"Director, I've heard that the courtesy with nobles in Shiga Kingdom is

strict. You should not be too frank."

"Eeh, that's annoying."

The angelic smile of the director who's wearing a white robe darkens. Even if he's beautiful the director is a man, so I don't feel anything even if his good looks get cloudy.

According to the information shown on the AR reading, he's level 41 and, surprisingly, doesn't hide his skills, his Unique Skills are [All-Purpose Drafting], and [Precision Work].

He also has various other production skills.

The vice director is hiding her skills so I'm not really sure, but judging from the daisho katana on her waist, it's probably something related to them.

"I'm Kuro of Shiga Kingdom. I am merely an emissary without peerage, thus you don't need to use stiff polite speech with me."

I introduced myself when we got close enough to have a conversation.

"Huh? You heard us? I'm Kenji Orierian the director here. That might sound like a fake name but it's the real one in this life you see."

The director seems to be more easygoing than I thought.

His name is [Kenji] on the AR reading.

Yet he adds Orierian on his name, he must cherish his family after his reincarnation.

After briefly exchanging greetings, we walk in the hall with him guiding us.

We separated from Zakuga the bodyguard, so he's not here now.

"This place is bright--are you using Light Drops?"

"No no, those are 『LEDs』 you know."

The director answered my question lightly.

"Ell, ee, dee?"

Zena-san's pronunciation was somewhat cute.

"Now that Kazura-san's no more, we've got to work hard and reproduce them or else we can't replace them."

"We sure lost a valuable man."

The vice-director replied Tomiko's remark without a hint of regret.

"It'll be quick and easy if we just find a reincarnated person with a Unique Skill that can synthesize rare metal, but the merchants under the imperial command of his majesty the emperor couldn't find one even after scouring the whole world, it might be impossible."

I see, so that's the reason why there's a lot of reincarnated people in the Weasel Empire.

"Saeki-san or I can make them as long as we have the material though."

Looking up on the map, this Saeki-san is someone with single digit level and has no Skill, so he's probably a technician who worked in a company that dealt in LED production in his former world.

Right, I have to confirm one thing--.

"Since you have LED lights, that means you also have a power generator?"

"Un? We do. But since we got the gasoline from Kazura-san, now we're using Electric Turtles and Electric Frogs to charge electricity on batteries."

"Using monsters as a substitute of power generator huh."

Just when I was about to be convinced, I realized that he was joking.

"--That's a lie isn't it? You can just use common coals to run a steam turbine right?"

"Mou, you noticed too fast. And I've made a dummy generator room for visitors and all."

The director puffs his cheeks, the vice director and the black haired girl are looking at him with enraptured expressions.

Tomiko is the only one who's looking at the three with cool eyes.

Several glass cases are put on a side of the wide corridor, exhibiting various things like a microwave oven and telephone instruments.

"There's a lot of unusual things."

"Those aren't made by the weasels, they seem to be articles from Japan."

Liza answered the surprised Zena-san in Shiga language.

Liza-san knows more about Japanese culture than Zena-san due to my flip-phone and Arisa telling her about various things with illusion magic.

"The things over there are summoned by Kazura-san. We still can't reproduce most of them you see."

The director said that in a slight vexation.

Even if he can draw a blueprint of an LSI with that Unique Skill, he probably doesn't have the facility to actually make one.

After walking on the corridor for a while, one of the sides has changed to one fitted with glass, showing the place with Electric Turtles and Electric Frogs generator like he said earlier.

"Here's the room to explain our research to our patrons. If we show our

thermal power generator recklessly, there might be someone who'd want to remodel the steam locomotives you see."

I thought he despises the weasels but it seems he's also relatively cautious against them.

"Once we can operate a large scale thermal power plant inside a building, the Weasel Empire will become a bright place like modern Japan. Installing telephone and electric lines are difficult though, so we'll need to make a power plant in each city y'see."

"How wonderful, director. The whole empire will benefit from science."

The vice director gives an applause with a serious look on her face.

"Do you know about the taboo of the Gods?"

"Un? Of course."

He calmly answered when I asked him in a low voice.

He's smiling and looking straight ahead but only his eyes aren't laughing.

"Can you see the black building over there?"

The director points at a neighboring big building that can be seen from a small window.

When I nodded, he said, "We have nuclear weapons over there you see."

Searching the map, every kind of modern weapons--even a nuclear submarine surprisingly, are inside the building. There's even SLBMs with nuclear marks inside a warship.

They're probably summoned by the weasel demon lord's Unique Skill. I'm intrigued just how they're maintaining them, but it must be mostly with Fixture magic.

"Are you going to threaten the Gods with nuclear weapons?"

"We can probably launch an attack that has enough power to create another sun."

The [God's Fragments] that couldn't even be scratched by the holy swords flashed on my mind.

"It's futile. Physical attacks don't work on Gods."

"Hee, It's as if you've fought them huh?"

The director looks at me with squinted eyes.

Tomiko and the black haired girl have disappeared before I knew it. Apparently the vice director who noticed our conversation sent the two away by asking them to do some errands.

"According to my Master, even the holy sword that could cut demon lords couldn't even interfere with 『God』."

"Hmmm, Hero Nanashi of Shiga Kingdom sure treads a tough life."

The director said that with a voice slightly mixed with pity. I also just want to have an easygoing sightseeing tour if I could.

"Well, putting that aside, Touya-san's probably going to do something 'bout the Gods."

"Are you close with tactician Touya?"

"Ahaha, don't even joke about it."

The director replied while laughing, but he spoke of it with chilly eyes.

"That person isn't someone who will fight head-to-head fair and square anyway, in order to defeat the gods, he's probably even willing to bump with your master and that thing whose name I hate to say you know?"

The director looks up at the sky from a small window while saying that.

What does he mean by 'that thing'?

It's probably not the new hero of Saga Empire, and judging from [thing whose name he hates to say] and an existence that can oppose the Gods--I see, that huh.

I can see a faint white moon in the noon sky the director is looking up at.



--What's that?"

"It's a mock-up of particle accelerator."

When I asked him about a ring-shaped object in the courtyard, the director answered as such.

"That, you see. I'm using that to find out the true nature of magic essence."

--The true nature of magic essence?

"You see. I cannot allow myself to not know the unknown. Once I understand magic essence, I'll investigate the reason why there are unscientific things like Skills and Level, and lastly--"

The director pulled my ears and whispered, "I want to find out the true identity of Gods" with a serious look.

"Keep it a secret from everyone okay. I haven't told anyone 'bout it."

After the director said that jokingly, the darkish anger burst out of the

vice-director who has been abstaining herself calmly behind us. I clap Liza's shoulder who reacted to the anger and retaliated by coercing the vice-director to stop her.

Still....

Researching about true nature of magic essence and all, this director is a true scientist.

His way of thinking is fundamentally different from me, an engineer.

"But, you see, there's a lot of obstacles in this world, it's hard to carry experiments."

He said that while looking at the particle accelerator mock-up.

"That particle accelerator is about 10 kilometer long, but there's too many monsters on the ground they'll quickly break it."

"Isn't the smoke car's rail longer?"

"Ahaha, you're so funny Kuro-san. I can quickly repair it if it's just locomotive rails, but that's not possible with the particle accelerator."

The director turns at me with a smile of disdain.

"We can immediately start the next phase once we can successfully launch the experimental rocket to the geosynchronous orbit though. Fortunately, some of my colleagues have the Infinite Inventory, so they can carry the parts needed to the space and we don't need to launch often. This kind of things is what's nice in a fantasy world isn't it."

I'm interested in his research and it's possible to immediately start the experiment with my cooperation, but since it will obviously violate the god's taboo, I restrain myself and speak nothing.

--Why are you restraining yourself? Just do it if you want to.

I felt like I heard such devilish whispers, but I don't intend to deviate from the rule created by the creator of this world, however imperfect. At least for my sake and the sake of my close friends.

And--.

"EEEEEH! There's monsters in space too?!"

"The elves refer to them as mysterious creatures, but a lot of them are of the same class as the Great Monstrous Fish Tovkezeera."

"Y-you serious.... Damnit, God is death!"

Hearing the director's begrudging wail, I almost told him that two of them had already died, but since that's probably not the response he wants to hear, I leave it to the vice-director to console the director.

Tomiko and the others came back then.

"Director, what's wrong?"

"Looks like he's a bit shocked."

Tomiko and the others acted as our guide in place of the director who went back to his room due to feeling unwell.

The director seemed to be the only one peculiar, the others staff members were all common people such as old factory workers and exhausted middle-aged male engineers.

"--Do we want to go back to our former world?"

My question seemed to be unexpected, the people who were having a welcoming party in the dining room fell silent.

"Don't even joke about it."

"Right. I was asked the same question when I first came here, no way I'm

going back to that world."

"Here, the meals are delicious, I can live in luxury, I have a house, a private car and above all, a job."

"I haven't got a bride yet, but the thought of leaving a world where beautiful diligent maids, elves whom I haven't seen yet, and girls with cat ears exist doesn't even cross my mind."

Apparently, the Weasel Empire asks the people they summoned about their will at the time of the summoning.

Most of the people here seem to be happy about their treatment, they don't seem to want to go back.

"Isn't it better to ask that question to the people who fell into the slum?"

According to a middle-aged engineer, young people who didn't have the required technical skills and ideas, and refused to even do chores are prowling around in the slum by relying on distributed food.

It seems many of the Japanese people who left this place couldn't adapt to the city life and picked that course.

"Those guys are only wallowing in self-pity, you'd be better off not getting involved with them you know?"

They told me that, but I decided to check it with my own eyes.



"--God's punishment is upon us! People! Pray to God, and beg for mercy!"

That sermon reached my ears once we got to the slum.

When I turn my eyes at the source, an old weaselkin priest that looks like a dead tree is shouting out loud with fiery eyes full of madness.

It looks as if he's going to spout fire from his mouth.

"That holy mark is of God Zaikuon. If Master allows, I can take care of him."

Liza is glaring at the old priest without hiding her animosity.

The memory when she was tormented by the fat Zaikuon priest in Seryuu city might have resurfaced.

"No, there's no need for that."

I point at a direction where several government officials are running.

"Holy Master Bodrazog, it's the emperor's pawns!"

"We're changing places! O pious youths, follow after me!"

The elderly priest took about 10 young people into a back alley.

The transported people I'm looking for are among the youths who escaped with him.

Looks like they're not waiting for distributed food in the slum, but devoting themselves to their faith.

Quite an intense act.

Of course there were several transported people who didn't participate in the act, but I couldn't even connect a conversation with them since they were too lethargic, let alone asking their will, I stumbled at the first step. If I were someone whose overflowing with the spirit of a volunteer, I probably would frequent here until they open their heart, but unfortunately, since I'm just a hypocritical ordinary person, I don't intend to take care of them more than this.

Of course, it'll be a different story if they come to me on their own.

And then, Lady Liedill visited our mansion when we returned there.

"Kuro! A summon from His Majesty the emperor! We're going to the Imperial Castle!"

Lady Liedill caught my arm and pulled it.

As always, she doesn't have consideration to an international guest, I think it's because she's been living in an isolated nation.

"Right now?"

"That's right! You can't make His Majesty wait. Your clothes fine, just come with me now."

Looks like the emperor is unexpectedly hasty.

Now then, let's have an audience with the emperor--.

15-22. Audience

*

Satou's here. There are people who want to settle everything by force anywhere. There's not many of them in modern Japan, however it might be unavoidable for that ratio to increase in another world.



"This hallway is gorgeous isn't it."

"It's just a bad taste of the riches."

Zena-san let out a sigh of admiration while we were walking on the luxurious hallway of the Imperial Castle.

The hallway is full of carefully placed decorations made of gold, silver and ivory, it's truly showy.

Liza thinks that it's a bad taste since the culture in Shiga Kingdom is different, but I think these ornaments are quite tasteful if they're set up accordingly.

The ones here are just us three, Lady Liedill and a maid who's guiding us. Zakuga the bodyguard got into a quarrel with Lady Liedill's comrades, the Temple Knights, and was dismissed when we arrived at the castle. He was treated quite badly, but since he didn't particularly ask for support, I left him alone.

I was talking with Zena-san while walking between the ornamental pillars and statues when the maid suddenly made a sudden turn.

"Oy, where are you going. The audience hall is straight ahead isn't it?"

"I'm very sorry. The passage ahead is currently under renovation..."

therefore we cannot use it."

The maid seemed to be scared of the threatening attitude of Lady Liedill, she averted her eyes when she said that.

--Oh?

I glanced at the map since I was bored and saw that there was no renovation going on the hallway ahead.

I couldn't see anything like renovation even after spinning the 3D map, so I checked the hallway with space magic [Clairvoyance].

As the result I confirmed that the maid was lying, so I told that fact to Zena-san and Liza with [Tactic Talk] magic.

"Renovation huh.... Must be because the idiots, Gilzem and Dazlim, fought inside the castle. Good grief, those idiots are just."

Lady Liedill seemed to believe the maid's lie.

Maybe the maid averted her eyes to prevent Lady Liedill's [Dragon Eyes] from seeing through it.

I found a suspicious person behind a pillar as I was walking while being on guard.

"Yo, long ears."

A giant weaselkin carrying a 3-meter long thin sword appeared.
He's the number 2 of the Temple Knights at level 70.

If we're only looking at level, he's about as strong as the current Liza.

"Gwalba-dono.... I'm sorry, but I'm acting under the imperial command of His Majesty. Leave it for later if you want a bout."

"My business isn't with ya."

He sneered and told Lady Liedill off.

"This great me's business is with the hero's follower over there."

"Are you going to point your sword at His Majesty's guest?"

"Whaaat? Ya afraid of me, hero's follower? What a big coward ya are."

--Cheap provocations.

"Gwalba-dono! Kuro-dono is a guest of His Majesty!"

"So what! Ya think I can miss this chance to fight someone strong."

Lady Liedill's restraint was brushed off by Gwalba's fighting race's reasoning.

The people here can probably manage even if this kind of problem arise since the country is isolated.

I can see how he ends up with his personality if he grows up in such an environment.

"Ain't it better if yer' master be called 『Sissy』 rather than 『Hero』?"

"Is that a provocation?"

Liza on the back would snap if I let this go on, so I looked down at him with cold eyes.

"Hahn! A follower who doesn't fight back at insults for his master 's just garbage."

The tip of a magic spear wrapped in red light appeared before the eyes of Gwalba who seemed bored.

"W-whaaat! Just when."

Gwalba stepped backward using Flickering Movement in a panic.
I wonder if the shiny hair on his forehead from cold sweat?

"Excuse me, Master. This small fish will be dealt with quickly, please wait a minute."

Liza apologized for her indiscretion while keeping her line of sight at Gwalba.

I should have kicked Gwalba and made him faint when I sensed that she was about to snap.

"Okay. I allow you to engage. You can seriously injure him, but try not to kill him."

"Understood."

Lady Liedill seems to find my permission unexpected, she tries to stop us in a hurry.

"Wait, Kuro-dono! Gwalba-dono's personality and conducts are the lowest but there's no one but Captain who could match him in a fight among Temple Knights."

"Long ears! Don't say it like the great me's weaker than Captain."

Irritated by the two's quarrel, Liza shot a very small Magic Edge Canon between them.

"Just come at me. I will teach you your place."

"Fine by meeee, you lizard!"

Gwalba's unsheathed sword is clad in blue light.

"--Holy weapon?"

Zena-san was surprised.

She has her own holy dagger inside her bag, yet she still gets honestly surprised, it's very like Zena-san.

Zena-san's honest cutesy really is her nice point.

"This is the holy sword granted by the emperor to great me, Monofoshi Zao. An imitation magic spear made from low class monsters can't hope to rival it!"

"Close that dirty mouth. You're polluting Magic Spear Douma which Master has created."

The red pattern on the magic spear receives Liza's quiet anger, pulsing profusely.

"Here's a greeting, Slashing Steel Flash! For now, die!"

Gwalba used physical reinforcement on his body in an instant and swung down his long sword while using the Flickering Movement.

The sharp slash that looked as if it could cut air molecules sliced Liza's figure, the after wave of the attack broke the paving stone behind her. Cloud of dust and roaring sound came flowing here from the depth of the hallway.

The expression of Gwalba who was grinning, sure of his victory, froze.

"--You're fit to be a street performer."

"I-impossible, you evaded the great me's Slashing Steel Flash?"

Liza's magic spear, clad in Magic Edge, is thrust before the neck of the groaning Gwalba, his adamantite neck guard fell down in half.

Looks like Gwalba couldn't see Liza's Flickering Movement and Ground Shrink.

"Merely leaving a decoy afterimage, every one of my companions can do that."

She pulled the magic spear while saying that and readied her stance.

"Take your stance. I will teach you how the strong fight."

Liza declared without feeling triumphant.



"Thank you for waiting."

"Good work. Shall we go then. The emperor is probably tired of waiting too."

Leaving Gwalba who has been sunk into the wall behind, we urge the maid to press forward.

His pride seems to have been crushed by Liza, but it's not like he's injured enough to die, there should be no problem leaving that weasel alone.

"Y-yes!"

The maid who had an expression like her soul had come out seemed to remember her duty, she straightened herself and replied and then guided us while looking frightened.

"W-with that Gwalba-dono, to be so one sided...."

"He had probably never fought an opponent who is of the same strength or stronger than him. There were too many opening and wasteful moves."

Liza said that calmly at Lady Liedill who muttered in disbelief.

Well, on top of training with opponents of different types, Pochi and Tama everyday, Liza also sparred with me, Hikaru and even Black Dragon sometimes, so there's no surprise that she's become strong.

Being able to instantly fully recover by going back to the solitary island palace and drinking advanced magic potion and elixir no matter how injured she got might have a big effect too.

"Please wait in front of this door."

When we arrived before a door made of unknown alloy, the maid ran up to the Imperial Knights who stood guard in front of it at a quick pace. These knights seem to be of a different affiliation than Lady Liedill's Temple Knights.

I operate the menu to obtain information about the emperor. He's around level 40, not too high, his skills are mostly composed of governmental and negotiation type ones, the only thing we need to be wary of is the [Geass] skill which we knew already.

--No there's still more.

I found a [Special Ability] column on the emperor's status. He has two Unique Skills, [Lucky Star] and [《Reflect Unlucky》]."

Looks like the weasel emperor is a reincarnated person.

I'm intrigued why he doesn't hide his info. Maybe there's no point in hiding it since his Geass skill is famous.

Just in case, I put several layer of mind magic [<<Enchant Spirit Protection>>] on Liza and Zena-san.

They already have the automatic defensive items made by analyzing Raka, but I feel that this magic is stronger as a countermeasure against the emperor's [Geass].

"We will be holding your weapons custody here."

"Understood."

I hand over the magic gun on my waist to the Imperial Knights.
Zena-san and Liza are going to wait in the waiting room next to the audience hall so they get to keep their weapons.

"Shiga Kingdom emissary Kuro-dono, step forward before the presence of His Majesty the emperor."

I step into the audience hall that's deeper than Shiga Kingdom's.

There is a huge throne in the room's depth, as if showing the emperor's authority.

The weasel emperor with purple fur who's sitting in that throne is also huge.

--Mainly horizontally that is.

I've seen a lot of people fat people before, but he's a far more heavyweight even compared the real sumo wrestlers I saw in the national sumo dome, let alone Mr. Overweight.

He's at least three time the width of a normal man.

--In other words, Shiga Kingdom is going to be the patron of that guy?"

"Affirmative. Everything is just as what's written in that letter."

After reading the Declaration of Independence, the emperor very lightly sighed in a way that couldn't be noticed by the people around him.

And he muttered in a very small voice my Attentive Ears skill couldn't pick up, "So he really picked that course", I caught from the movement of his lips.

Apparently the emperor had predicted that the crown prince would declare independence.

"What! Shiga Kingdom intends to cut off Dejima Island!"

"Those bastards, now that it's come to this, we should sortie our unrivaled airship force and raid their capital!"

"Aye! Even without utilizing the science, our victory is cemented if we deploy half of the Temple Knights even if the dragon knights that appeared in Makiwa Kingdom were to intervene."

The weasel ministers who was in the audience hall got roused when they heard about Dejima Island's independence.

Apparently, unlike the weasels people outside the country, I feel that the ones inside the empire is short tempered, or rather they're quick to blow their tops.

It's interesting how they went past Dejima Island and straight to Shiga Kingdom.

Perhaps the ministers of Weasel Empire have some complex about Shiga Kingdom.

"Call General Putepo."

With the emperor's command, a chamberlain quickly left the audience hall.

--So we can't avoid the war after all huh.

"General Putepo?"

"Are we going to leave the conquest to an incompetent person who only got his peerage from his house?"

"It might be possible to suppress Dejima Island if they're alone in this...."

Quite a harsh evaluation.

After a while, someone wearing odd disorganized ceremonial clothes who seems to be General Putepo appears.

He's a plump weaselkin who looks like a small fry.

"Your Majesty, I have come at your call."

"Dejima Island has declared independence. Your third army is fit for the subjugation."

"Crown Prince-dono rebelled! I Putepo will burn down all of Dejima Island and make it a hell where no one alive."

"No need of unnecessary killing. Arrest only the crown prince by all means, or if it's not possible--kill him."

"I've certainly accepted Your Majesty's command."

General Putepo accepted the weasel emperor's command with exaggerated gestures that reeked of acts.

""Please wait, Your Majesty!""

A lionkin and a tigerkin wearing Temple Knights ceremonial dress entered the audience hall while speaking in unison.

"Lord Gilzem and Lord Dazlim huh...."

"Those rowdy bunch. They probably come here to protest and ask for their participations."

The ministers spoke ill behind the back of the two who were wrapped in violent aura.

"Your Majesty's authority would be stained if you left it to an incompetent general."

"We will take care of it all with just our platoons if you would leave it to us."

Lionkin Gilzem and tigerkin Dazlim appealed at the emperor while showing off their muscles.

It must be a popular style in Weasel Empire.

Dear me, communication between cultures is difficult isn't it.

The weasel emperor once again muttered in a small voice that couldn't be heard by the people around, my [Attentive Ears] skill picked up, "These fools."

"I've put my trust on General Putepo. I am sure that he will do the job as I wish it to be."

Hearing the emperor, the two made sullen faces, General Putepo had a satisfied smile on his whole face.

However--[As I wish it to be] huh.

I caught a glimpse of the emperor not wanting to win the war.

"Moreover, you Temple Knights have more fitting battles waiting. Work hard to seek strength until that time."

The weasel emperor followed up at the two who looked discontent.

"We've prepared a new area in the artificial labyrinth at the suburb. Capture the labyrinth and improve yourself."

The emperor instructed and then a chamberlain presented a tray with egg-sized jewels on it at the two.

It seems those are an item called [Teleport Stone].

I'd like to learn the way to make them if they're as the name imply.

"Acknowledged!"

"I'm itching for a fight."

The two gleefully took the [Teleport Stone], bowed at the emperor and left the audience hall.

Now then, it's about time to talk with the emperor and get down to the business--.

I have to talk about the science and the taboo.

15-23. The Forbidden Science

*

Satou's here. There's a saying, [Understand everything from only one part], but I think one needs to [Study 1000 times, review 10000 times] in order to embody that. If you don't have a foundation on anything, you'll notice that you won't make it once you enter the society.



"--Emperor, I have a slightly complicated thing to talk about. Could we talk in private if possible?"

"Very well, come several steps forward."

The emperor said some flag-raising thing, but since my Trap Detection and Crisis Perception skills aren't reacting, it should be fine.

After walking several steps ahead as instructed, the ground around the throne began to descend.

Looks like the throne and its surrounding is an elevator.

"Don't you think you're too careless?"

"There is nothing to fear. My good luck knows no adversary."

I see, it looks like the weasel emperor is absolutely confident in his Unique Skill.

This elevator seems to continue outside the map.

It probably connects to the City Core.

The descent speed is slow, so I decide to talk about the taboo while we're descending.

"--Do you know that science, particularly communication technology and railroads, violate the God's taboo?"

"Of course."

The weasel emperor nodded at me.

"Then--"

The weasel emperor raise his hand to stop me from pressing on.

"We started precisely because we've done the preparation."

"Preparation? Are you talking about your experiment with a small country? Or maybe it's about the nuclear weapons in Brains?"

The weasel emperor bursts into laughter after hearing me.

"Do you know about Kakyo?" <TLN: oversea Chinese merchants.>

The weasel emperor suddenly asked that question once he was done laughing.

He ignores my bewilderment and continues on.

"Spreading around the world, permeating their own culture on every part of the world to preserve it."

"What about it?"

I still don't understand what he means.

"That is precisely the role model. My kins have spread throughout the world, thus our culture and blood would not come to an end even if Weasel Empire were ruined by the Gods."

The weasel merchants whom I saw not only in Shiga Kingdom but the

whole world flashed in my mind.

Regardless of which country they were, they did business with their own culture.

"--You're already sure of your destruction?"

"A wise ruler has to prepare many hands."

Several images floated across my mind.

"Like the parishes and Dejima Island?"

"That's right. The parishes of where only the pious believers and priests are gathered have none of the science, and Dejima Island which is estranged from our empire most likely won't be subjected to the god's wrath."

Yet he's sending a subjugation army on Dejima Island--no, that's why he assigned an incompetent general huh.

But that means he won't save even 10% of the empire.

"Are you going to sacrifice the majority of your subjects?"

"What kind of statesmen abandon their people. Those are simply insurances in case we lose to the Gods."

The weasel emperor laughed down at my critic.

"Do you think you can win?"

The emperor had a vicious smile that looks like it's cursed when he heard my question.

It appears he really intends to win against Gods.

"Chances are high that you won't win against Gods even if you use nuclear weapon y'know? Or maybe you're going to use it to threaten the Gods?"

"An anecdote from an ancient king huh. Have you read the slates in the

『Room of Truth』?"

Oh, some enigmatic words came out.

"Room of Truth?"

"It's a storage housing the records of The Sage who continues to carve the truth since an age older than the ancient times."

I see, I don't know who this [Sage] is, but that [Room of Truth] looks to be the weasel emperor's source of information.

"Everything, from the God's taboo to how the civilizations that violated the taboo were destroyed, are recorded in it."

"And yet, you're still going to fight the Gods?"

"That's right. Time is nigh for the people to be liberated from the control of God's 『Blessing』."

--Liberation huh.

Somehow, the word [Liberation] is littered in bad images ever since I came to another world.

It's probably due to the strong impact of the demon lord's believer groups, [Wings of Liberty] and [Light of Liberty].

"I'd like to ask for a shameless request. Could you let me read the slates in that 『Room of Truth』."

The things about God's taboo that I know mostly come from Corpse in Selbira Labyrinth's lower layer and the story I heard in my fight with [Dog-head Demon Lord].

Demi god-mode Aze-san said that she didn't know about when I asked her.

"Hou? You wish to know the source of our empire's power."

Hearing my request, the weasel emperor grinned gleefully.

--Looks like he's going to ask for something extravagant in exchange.

"I ask you five things as the compensations."

The weasel emperor spread his thick short fingers and said that. That reminds me, the elevator has stopped descending in the middle of the way.

"Two of them are a sacred stone--『Philosopher's Stone』 the size of a person's head, and a Darkness Crystal big enough to free a huge rocket from the shackles of gravity."

The weasel emperor said that while folding his fingers.

"Once our fight with the gods begin, you and--Hero Nanashi and his followers--"

Fumu, he's probably going to ask for my assistance.

--Are to stay neutral."

"Neutral? You don't wish for us to take your side?"

"That's right. People who carry God's Fragments in them cannot go against Gods."

--What the heck is that?

"First time I heard of it."

"There were cases of it happening in the past. A hero of God Parion cannot brush off the request of God Parion."

I shouldn't swallow the weasel emperor's words whole, but if the [God's

Fragment] is something similar to backdoor, it should be easy to hack it. For example, if they can arbitrarily manipulate the information shown on my Menu, like say, adding [Possession: Demon Lord] state on someone, I will be cautious against that someone.

However--.

The [Girl in Painting] that I saw in my fight with the Dog Head passes by my mind.

--That seemingly indifferent girl doesn't seem to be the type who will go to the trouble of manipulating someone from outside.

Of course, I don't know if that girl is really God Parion since the one who said that was the Dog Head.

"I promise you our neutrality."

If the fight with Gods really starts, it seems I will need to withdraw to the solitary island palace with Arisa and Hikaru.

"What's the remaining two?"

"Once we begin our fight against the Gods, that will probably become the source of persecution. I don't care if it's only within your reach. Please protect my fellow countrymen."

"Understood."

He's quite the countryman.

I can just order all Echigoya Firm's branch offices in the whole country to shelter them.

"And lastly--"

The weasel emperor's last demand was slightly troubling.



--How about it?"

"Understood. I promise you that I won't do destructive acts on anything I see beyond this."

I don't know what's in the area ahead of us since it's of another map, but the tactician is probably there.

They might be hiding the third demon lord after the rat and weasel demon lords, but the only demon lord that's dangerous enough to equal the dog-head and the golden wild bear king should only be the [Goblin Demon Lord].

I'd be surprised if they had sealed God Zaikuon who is in the middle of revival, but since it's not like I have a particular attachment to the God, I think I can easily ignore it if that's the case.

"Just in case, it's not a site for human experimentation and torture is it?"

I asked just to be sure since I'm not a superman who can carefreely hold a conversation while witnessing the weak going through such thing. Even if I won't do anything destructive, I could rescue them after all.

"I have not such an irrational hobby."

"Good then."

Once I nodded at the emperor, the elevator started to descend once again.

For some reason, the weasel emperor doesn't use his [Geass] skill on me. It's strange when he can make things easier just by using his [Geass].

Maybe he's restraining himself from easily relying on his skill.

We continue descending while I'm thinking that.



The wall on one side of the elevator became transparent at the same time my Radar notified me that I had entered a new area, a huge underground cave came into my view.

It's probably about as big as the large cave under Shiga Capital.

There's a glass cylinder that extends to the ceiling in the center of the large cave with bare bedrock.

The cylinder is filled with green liquid, a giant creature with purple white ash skin that looks like a formalin-soaked specimen is floating inside. Looks like it's not a dead specimen, it's just sleeping.

"A giant's embryo--no, that's not it."

--It's a troll.

Its body is abnormally big, it has ox-like dark purple horns.

The tusks protruding on its menacing face looks sharp enough to penetrate even the Black Dragon's scales.

--A troll demon lord.

If I'm not mistaken, his name was mentioned during my fight with the Dog-head demon lord.

Dog head said that he snatched a useful Unique Skill from the troll demon lord or something.

"That's right. That demon lord is the one called The Sage, the record keeper of the 『Room of Truth』."

The weasel emperor jerked his chin, urging me to see the demon lord's status.

AR readings show [Demon Lord] as his main title and [The Sage] and [Recorder of Truth] as his hidden titles.

His level is 109, his skills are full of magic skills.

And his Unique Skills are [Dragon Vein Connection] and [Infinite Record]. He probably records the information he gets from [Dragon Vein Connection] on something using [Infinite Record].

"Look, the next slate arises."

I shifted my sight per the weasel emperor's word and saw a light purple slate growing on the glass cylinder where the demon lord was sleeping. That transparent cylinder seems to be made of something different than glass.

Once the slate finishes growing, it freely falls down.

I imagined that it would break on the hard ground, but its velocity decreased in the middle of the way, ending the fall with only a hard sound.

Masked men in white robes gathered there, they collected the slate, put it on a workbench-like thing and then started doing something.

"That's your source of information?"

"As you can see."

The emperor affirmed.

The source of the weasel emperor's information really seems to be that troll demon lord.

No wonder he made me promise not to [Do anything destructive no matter what I see beyond this.]

"Maybe the troll demon lord just tricking you by manipulating the information?"

When I asked that, he scornfully laughed, "Hmph."

"Do you think someone who's been entrusted with a country didn't do that much evidence gathering?"

Guess he's right, the ones at stake are not just his life after all.

"We've confirmed that the information from at least 700 years ago are recorded with no mistake."

The weasel emperor said confidently that with a triumphant look.

The elevator finally stops, a bridge made from an artificial material that looks like it's made from Force magic, is hanging between the elevator and the floor.

"--Let me take over from here."

A man wearing deep purple overcoat appeared from the opposite side of the bridge.

The [Old Man] noh mask he's wearing on his face peeks through his hood.

Indescribable discomfort and disgust arose in me the moment I saw that figure.

However that discomfort and disgust immediately abated.

Intrigued by the unnaturalness of it, I checked the log and see--

>[Anathema Mask]'s effect resisted.

--displayed.

It seems to be a mask to make him disliked.

Of course, that's not all, with normal appraisal, the only information that can be seen are that his name is [Touya], titles are [Tactician], [The Hated], and [The Isolated], and his level is 55.

The degree of concealment is even higher than the [Hide Skill] reincarnated people have.

The performance is quite high, though not as good as my [Thief God Harness].

"Tactician Touya huh."

"Right on the mark. Kuro the emissary of Shiga Kingdom--"

I could hear a boy-like voice overlapped by an old man voice.

The mask seems to camouflage his voice too.

And then, his true information is displayed besides the fake information on the AR reading as a double exposure, as if it knows that I've seen through the camouflaged voice.

His skills are [Unknown] concealed by [Hide Skill], but everything else are bare.

Surprisingly his name sounds familiar to me.

"--And your true identity is."

Tactician Touya stopped his words to put on airs.

"Hero Nanashi of Shiga Kingdom."

I can imagine the face of an elf with a triumphant look behind the noh mask.

He's probably smirking with half-open eyes.

"You've done your homework, tactician Touya."

Yes, his race is elf.

And his name is--.

"Or perhaps, I should call you Trazayuya the elf sage?"

15-24. Trazayuya

*

Satou's here. The scene of the detective main protagonist splendidly untying the case in a mystery series, fully loading the catharsis, is really wonderful. It's just that, the feeling of bitterness from having all of your wrong reasoning shot down is the only real flaw isn't it.



"Hou? Well done figuring that out. Correct."

I thought he would play dumb, but he easily admitted it instead.

Tactician Touya--No, Sage Trazayuya lowers his hood and takes off the mask.

I could see flame-like swaying light in his purple eyes.

On the other hand, there's no eyebrow on his cleanly shaved head and the pointed end of his ears are smoothed over too.

That reminds me, I remember reading, "My life will run out soon", in a document I found in [Trazayuya Maze].

Wonder why he's fine?

Asking, "Didn't you die?" would be too rude, I can't do that.

"However, Touya the elf has died. I'll have you understand that the one here is Touya the tactician of Weasel Empire."

"What do you mean?"

Does he want to erase his Sage persona?

"I was saved by His Majesty when I was foolishly turning into a demon lord. Thus my life as an elf ended at that time."

Sage Trazayuya--Tactician Touya smirked as if mocking himself.

Although I can't know for sure, he probably used too much of his Unique Skills in order to create the [Maze].

Nevertheless, I'm surprised that the weasel emperor would go to such a distant place even if it was years ago.

At that time, he might have been a willful crown prince, or perhaps a prince whose succession right was low in the order.

"Did you build the empire as a repayment of the favor?"

--Favor?"

Tactician Touya looked puzzled.

"Is it not?"

"I helped build the ideal empire because the weaselkin offered me the 『Dungeon Seed』 they found in a ruin as a compensation."

--Dungeon Seed?

I recalled the labyrinth in Seryuu City when I heard that unfamiliar term. I wonder if that labyrinth was also created using that Dungeon Seed thing?

"Let us end the reminiscence there."

The emperor who were left behind, corrected the subject on track.

"Sorry, Tarou. I said something unnecessary."

"Add 'emperor' there. The subordinates can hear us here."

"I'll be careful, Emperor Tarou."

He's speaking familiarly with the emperor using his name even though he was calling him [His Majesty] earlier.

I still can't quite grasp the relationship between tactician Touya and the emperor.

Right, I've to confirm several thing before we get to the main subject--.

"I want to confirm some things first. Why did you do acts of terrorism in Shiga Kingdom?"

At first I didn't ask about it since I thought it was only natural for the emperor of the Weasel Empire to cause disturbances behind the back if they regarded Shiga Kingdom as their enemy, but if it was an instruction from Sage Trazayuya who should have had a favorable relationship with Shiga Kingdom, I'd like to know his intention.

"Acts of terrorism?"

Rather than feigning ignorance, it feels more like he doesn't understand what I'm talking about.

"You guys were the one who gave the Reborn Seeds to the spies of Holy State Parion right?"

"You're not completely wrong, but it's not correct either."

Tactician Touya corrected me in a roundabout way.

"Us giving the Reborn Seeds to the spies of Holy State Parion is the truth, however we did that in order to escalate the revolt on the western part of the continent to attract the gods' attention there. We also never expected that the spies of Holy State Parion would ignore the war and do acts of terrorism in Shiga Kingdom."

I stare at tactician Touya's eyes.

There's neither wavering nor impurity there.

I see--Looks like he's not lying.

The ones behind the illicit manufacturing of the Fiend Drug in Selbira Labyrinth's underground were the demons after all.



"Touya, tell him about the god's taboo."

"I do not mind, but wouldn't it better for him to check the document himself?"

"It would be impossible to read 20.000 years worth of record wouldn't it? It's not like he's connected to a search engine."

I can search just fine if I put them in my Storage, but I'd better not tell them about it.

"I'll read the document later. Please tell me the summary."

"The things that are treated as God's taboo are 『Reincarnated person and transported person teaching the way to make integrated circuit (LSI)』, 『Means of permanent mass transportation』, 『Easy means of communication between cities』, 『Mass production through factory modernization』, and lastly 『Printing』."

I see, Mukuro's railroad was the second and the communication tower fell under the third huh.

Sailing boats and airships probably barely miss the second criteria.

Space magic and communications through city cores are probably in the clear since they don't meet the condition of [easily] for the third one.

But, the fourth one is a close call.

I was going to start doing that with Echigoya Firm.

However, the first one, integrated circuit should be pretty similar to the golem creation process using [Philosopher's Stones] and magic cores--no, I'm the only one who know how to do that besides the elf.

That means, revealing that technology to outside world is dangerous huh....

I feel that it should be safe since it's a magical technology, but there's no need to tread on thin ice.

--Wait, there's something amiss.

"『Treated』 as taboo?"

When I repeated tactician Touya's word, the emperor grinned an evil smile.

"That's right. The gods never distinctively said 『This is a taboo』. They simply gave Divine Punishment to a country and then they gave a notification through the oracle miko that the country had violated the taboo."

That's quite awful.

It's like executing someone and then later said that, "That's a crime so you get to be punished."

"The time difference between the time a taboo was violated until the Divine Punishment is quite wide on each case, you'll see if you read the document later. There are cases where it happened the next day at the earliest and 10 years at the longest."

That means Weasel Empire hasn't triggered the divine punishment for

longer than the one in that record huh....

"Do you know what are the differences?"

Taking the tactician Touya's place, the emperor asked me.

"Is it the existence of people who have Oracle skill or perhaps holy magic skills?"

I answered while remembering the time I met Lady Liedill.

Adding up the isolation of the parishes, this answer must be right.

"Correct."

The emperor floated a carnivorous smile on his face when he heard my answer.

"We obtained the conclusive evidence by testing it in a small country."

--Oy.

"Hereditary skills (Gifts) the like of God Urion's 『Eyes of Condemnation』 do not appear to trigger the divine punishment. People with low level holy magic also won't reach the Gods."

From the story I heard from the captain of tank unit I captured in Makiwa Kingdom, that country wasn't destroyed even after violating the taboo, but judging from the emperor's way of talking....

"What happened to that small country?"

I couldn't help but asked even though I already knew the result.

"Of course, it was destroyed--"

Hypocritical anger is rising in me from hearing the way he calmly said it like a researcher who merely reported the result of the experiment. The destruction of a country with no acquaintance of mine should have nothing to do with me, yet I can't help but empathize.

"Suppress your anger. The one who destroyed it was not us."

The emperor told me that the king of that country was the one who happily introduced the technology brought by his spies in the country. He only let the spies to be caught on purpose.

"Tarou, humans cannot think as logically as weaselkin. That applies to the hero too--nay, precisely because he's a hero, he dislikes seeing the weak being unilaterally exploited."

"Fumu, either way. I'm going to annihilate any country who bares their fang on my country without leaving anyone alive you know?"

"Even in spite of that."

I take a deep breath to calm my mind while listening to tactician Touya reprimanding the emperor.

Thanks to the maxed out MND stat, calmness comes back to me as if a switch was turned.

I should feel thankful for this convenient body, but it makes me feel weird at myself somehow.

"If I must take their life anyway, giving meaning to their death is--"

"Forget about it. I don't want to break my promise."

I interrupted the emperor and unilaterally told him.

I've promised that I [won't do destructive acts] in exchange for the information after all.

"--Finding someone who can think logically is harder than searching for a star fragment in a dessert."

The emperor lamented something, so I turn at tactician Touya.
I still have something I need to ask him.

"I've heard from the crown prince. The way to oppose the gods is
『something that anyone knows, therefore no one arrives at the answer』--."
"That guy is talkative, contrary to my expectation."

Tactician Touya sighed at my question.

"You've seen the rocket in development at Brains haven't you?"

I affirmed.

"The answer is space."

--Huh? That's surprisingly normal.

"The known range of the Gods of this world is from the ground to the low orbit at most. If we just build facilities that inherit the scientific technology on the back of the moon, those guys can't do anything about it."

I see--I don't think it's that simple, but it fits with the things the emperor asked me.

--Mu?

For an instant, really only an instant, the emperor's expression twitched.
I'm not saying that what these two talked about are all lies, but it seems there's more to it.

I probably won't get an answer asking them here anyway, so I'll keep it in the corner of my mind for now.

"Touya, the 『Philosopher's Stone』 and the 『Dark Crystal』 that you want are finally available in sight."

"Excellent. Now we don't need to search for the undersea city in the southern sea whose existence itself is doubtful."

The emperor and tactician Touya had that conversation while I was pondering.

Apparently, the thing they were looking for in Nenerie the undersea city was not the floating engine in the central part of the city, but the Darkness Crystal which should be used in the core of the floating engine.

"So, when are they going to be available?"

"That's up to him."

The emperor jerked his chin at me.

"I'll give them to you now."

"--What?"

I took out a 『Philosopher's Stone』 and a 『Darkness Crystal』 from my storage and handed them over to Touya.

"As expected of Hero. Infinite Inventory has no limit so you can carry your item at all time."

Tactician Touya muttered enviously.

According to Arisa, it seems there are some reincarnated people who have Infinite Inventory, but I've yet to meet one.

The emperor nods satisfyingly and then he calls the masked people with a bell in his hand.

"Kuro. I will fulfill my promise. You can read the slates in the storage of the Record of The Sage all you want, however you are not allowed to take them away."

After saying that, the emperor called a masked person with graceful body line.

I can't see her look but according to AR reading, she seems to be a 120cm tall female spriggan.

"Looking for tens of hundred millions slates without a guide will be painful. Follow this librarian. Use her as you like."

"Thank you."

After thanking the emperor, I follow the librarian to the slate storage. Tactician Touya has already returned to the surface, the emperor is riding the elevator back to the audience hall.

When the librarian touched the door of the slate storage, it lit up and I could hear the sound of a key opening.

"This place is the Infinite Bookshelves."

"I can see that it's a kind of spacial expansion.... This is amazing."

I saw bookshelves that extended everywhere without limit the moment I entered the slate storage.

"Lead me to the oldest slates."

"Yes, please over here. Please do not be separated from me. People who do not wear this mask won't be able to leave once they get lost here."

The librarian told me threateningly.

I can easily get out here whenever with Unit Arrangement, but coming

back here would be troublesome so I'll make sure not to get separated.

We've just walked for a few steps but I already can't see the door behind and the bookshelves around us have changed to ones that look quite old. The fantasy sensation is quite nice.

"These are the oldest slates from approximately 20000 years ago."

"Alright."

--Now then.

Each slate only has around 128 words, but reading all of the hundreds millions slates normally would take too much time.

Guess I'll have to use my trump card here.

"I'll be reading them using a special kind of method. Make sure not to get surprised."

"Special? Please do not damage the slates--"

"Of course, I promise you that there won't even be a chip on them."

I interrupted the librarian, extended [Magic Hands] to pick around 100 slates and put them into my Storage.

--The slate!"

The slates reappeared faster than the librarian could finish her surprise. Of course at their original locations.

The contents of the slates stowed in the Storage are saved as picture data.

I originally wanted to use the advanced magic [Copy Storage] used to preserve old books.

Pasting them into paper would take time, but it can be done in an instant if it's into image files.

"Let's steadily go at it."

"Y-yes."

I urge the librarian and copy the slates one after another.

I wanted to quicken the pace, but copying 1000 of them at the same time was my limit so I used the Parallel Thinking skill to read the saved contents while continuing copying more.

According to the records on the slates, floating castles like the Shadow Castle in the eastern Rumooku Kingdom that were in active service 20000 years ago were the oldest.

The record began when the troll demon lord was defeated by the Dog Head Ancient King and sealed in this burial mound.

"--These are all just troll demon lord's grumbles."

For 100 years after he had been sealed, many of the records were of the troll demon lord bad mouthing Dog-head.

The next most numerous ones were complaints about the Gods and an ancient magic empire.

If the troll demon lord is to be believed, it seems the ancient magic empire at that time got the support of the God blessing and cruelly and tyrannically oppressed the vassal kingdoms on the ground.

Dog-head and troll demon lord raised a revolt against the gods for the sake of liberating the kingdoms on the ground from the ancient magic empire's rule.

However, Dog-head gradually went on rampages and started destroying the kingdoms on the ground which should have been the ones he was intending to save so the troll demon lord became hostile at the Dog-head but he was defeated and got sealed away.

There's also a record about the Dog-head and his manservant getting defeated by the gods and god apostles soon after.

Though it seems Dog-head had been reviving himself every hundreds to a thousand year using Selbira's Labyrinth as the seedbed.

Most of the demon lords stopped reviving once they revived themselves a few times, but the Dog-head was especially obstinate and continued to revive himself.

Every time that happened, ancient dragons and heavenly dragons who were easily provoked had a revenge match against the Dog-head and got themselves beaten, and then the Gods entreated the Dragon God to defeat the Dog-head.

Looking at the records, it seems there was only a few which got sealed like the troll demon lord.

Surprisingly enough, the most dangerous one, the Demon God was sealed by the Gods.

It seems the Demon God is sealed in the moon, though the source of the information is [Oracle Miko] so I don't know if I should really believe it. Looks like the Demon God was sealed when it was exhausted from its fight against the Dragon God.

If this is all true, then while being sealed the Demon God might be--no, it's not like I have a proof that the Demon God knows about that.

Let's stop putting guesses on top of guesses.

I see that the weasel emperor spoke the truth, at least from the records I've read so far.

However, I couldn't really find any proof about how reincarnated and transported people aren't able to defy the Gods.

Indeed, there were records of some baffling behaviors like a hero who

didn't act like a hero at all ending up losing his blessing and got killed by a demon lord, or a hero who suddenly assassinated a demon lord the moment he reconciled with that demon lord.

There were also cases where a demon lord who was reigning its kingdom in peace suddenly destroyed the kingdom with its own hand, and a reincarnated person who was allying himself with a hero killed the hero during the triumphal return from their demon lord subjugation, but I think those aren't enough to insist that they were manipulated by the Gods.

There were several records of reincarnated people and heroes challenging the Gods and the god's apostles, but none was victorious.

Some demon lords defeated the god's apostles, but none was able to gain victory against the Gods. Even that Dog-head was only able to end it in a draw in several occasions.

I think tactician Touya and his cohorts found the way to win against the Gods from these cases, but I couldn't understand how.

The only way to overcome Gods that I can think of is by having them fight against another God.

The only successful example of threatening the Gods was Corpse. Other than him, every one who did was destroyed.

"--This one is finally at 600 years ago huh. Just a bit more."

I turned at the librarian who had been quiet since a while ago, she was sinking on the floor while looking like her soul had escaped her mouth.

I check the clock on the menu in a glance.

Yup, I got way too absorbed.

It's just a little bit more, I want to read all of them before going back, but

she's already at her limit.

I'll go ask for another librarian.

I carry the girl and [Teleport] to the entrance with space magic.

One question appeared in my mind while I was opening the door.

--If their aim is to build a base in space, then what are they keeping the nuclear weapon for?

Judging from the documented slates, I don't think physical attacks work on Gods.

Right at that time, the ringtone from the space magic [World Phone] rang in my mind.

--From Arisa.

『Master, is it alright to call you now?』

『Yea, no problem. Is there any trouble?』

Arisa hesitated at my question.

Looking at everyone's condition on the marker column, it doesn't seem to be a life-threatening trouble.

『No, well rather than trouble, it's』

Quite an indecisive attitude for Arisa.

『W-wait, Nana. I said you can't, this isn't Tactic Talk, so your voice won't reach. 』

Looks like something is happening with Nana.

While still being connected to Arisa's call, I connect a call to Nana with

[Telephone].

『Master! Affair is wrong so I tell! The only one who is allowed to call Master, Master, is me--calling familiarly is prohibited so I tell.』

<TLN: Nana calls Satou 'Masuta' for Master in Japanese. Others call him 'Goshujinsama' also for Master.>

It became even more incomprehensible.

It seems Nana is talking with someone over there.

I'd better go back to the solitary island palace for now.

Family crisis over world crisis.

I open the menu and glide my finger to the Unit Arrangement.

『Ugeeh, you serious!』

Dangerous words came from Arisa.

--I can't delay anymore.

I return to the solitary island palace with Unit Arrangement.

There is--.

"Master, found!"

A little girl with snow-like white long straight hair jumped at me.

Err, who are you?

I couldn't issue that question at the girl who looked like a kitten who had found her mother.

I glanced at Arisa for help.

15-25. Dungeon's Function

*

Satou's here. I wonder since when was it, stories about dungeon management became as common as the stories about adventurers clearing dungeons. Personally speaking, I think it started from the fourth volume of the classic dungeon exploration RPG masterpiece.



"Master! Master, Master!!"

The white haired little girl repeated the same word while hugging me. I asked Arisa for help, but she's only scratching her cheek, not looking like she'll take any action.

"Master is my Master so I declare."

"Mwu, too close."

Nana hugs me from behind, Mia tries to separate the white-haired little girl away from me.

Due to the physical correction from her level, Mia easily pulled the little girl away.

"Aa, Master! Let me go, Masteeeeeeeeer!"

The little girl who got separated panicked and struggled to desperately come back to me while crying.

Seeing that, Nana muttered "young organism" and stopped moving.

"Bullying is uncool~?"

"You shouldn't make a little girl cry nanodesu."

"Mwu."

Mia loosened her grips from Tama's and Pochi's cover fire, using that chance the white-haired little girl jumped out and clung back to my waist.

As Lulu enters bringing some tea, I sit down on the sofa and put the little girl on my lap.

Tama is looking enviously, but it doesn't seem like she'll push her aside.

"Now then, so what's with this girl?"

According to AR reading, her name is [Core Two], her race is [Homonculus].

Since her affiliation is the Dejima Island's [Phantasmal Labyrinth], she's probably the external probe unit of the Dungeon Core.

"Picked up~?"

"When Pochi was traveling to better herself in combat with Tama, she was in nude and chased by bad people nodesu."

Tama and Pochi puffed their chests with eyes full expectation, so I patted and praised them, "You two did great."

Pochi's explanation was a bit too short, but she probably meant that they found Core Two running away from bad people when they were training.

Still--.

"How did you girls know that she was my acquaintance?"

"Looking for Master~?"

"She said Master, so it's Master nanodesu."

I see, that's really like Tama and Pochi.

"Master, let's go home. It's dangerous outside the dungeon you know?"

Core Two turned her head upward while clinging to my chest.

Nana twitched whenever Core Two called me Master, but it seemed she was controlling herself, recalling the time when Core Two was crying.

"There's not many place safer than here you see."

The only place safer than here is probably only Yuika's base with her barrier.

"Not true."

Core Two shook her head. I'm not sure if she doesn't believe me, or if she can't accept it.

"Well, the labyrinth will be conquered sooner or later after all~"

"Not true!"

Core Two reflexively objected Arisa's carefree words.

"If I'm with Master it's going to be absolutely absolutely invincible!"

"W-well, if Master is there even a straw house would be invincible."

"Of cour~se?"

"If you're with Master, everywhere is wonderfully peerless nanodesu."

At Core Two's rebuttal, Arisa assented with a stunned expression, Tama anad Pochi also agreed.

Core Two inclined her head in confusion at their reactions and looked up at me.

"Would you like some snacks?"

"Snacks?"

After confirming that we had calmed down, Lulu came in with snacks.

"Choco biscuit~?"

"You put biscuit on the sooft chocolate and eat it nodesuyo."

Tama and Pochi explained the snacks today to the Core Two.

"Chocolate?"

"Young organism, you do it like this so I teach."

Nana demonstrated it to the Core Two who didn't understand.

"Tasty. Master, it's tasty."

"Thank you, don't mind me, you can eat more."

Core Two's eyes sparkled on her first bite, she turned back and offered the chocolate biscuit to me.

I bit it once and prompted her to eat the rest.

"Master, a~n."

When Arisa mimicked Core Two and offered her chocolate biscuit to me, the other girls also mimicked her and offered theirs.

I'm not too fond of sweet things, but it tastes curiously tasty today, maybe because I was investigating things for a whole day and all night.

"Kya"

When I pretended to eat Lulu's finger along with her chocolate biscuit, she got surprised with reddened face.

The effect of staying up all night might have just seeped in.

"--So, did your talk with the emperor go well?"

Arisa asked while licking the chocolate on her fingers.

"Hey, the other girls will imitate you."

While whacking Arisa's head, I get Arisa, Hikaru and the others to go to the other room to talk about my talk with the emperor.

I asked the other girls to take care of Core Two.

"Master, please don't leave me."

When I put her down from my lap, Core Two separated her hands from the chocolate biscuit and clung to me.

"I'm just going to finish my business for a bit. Once I'm done, let's go to the 『Phantasmal Labyrinth』. Until then, wait here and enjoy the snacks okay."

"U-un. I'll wait."

Core Two nodded with an anxious look.

I waved my before going out of the room to ease her anxiety even a bit.



"--He's evil."

Sera who heard my story gave her impression about the weasel emperor with an indignant expression.

The ones here are Hikaru, Princess Shistina, Sera, Arisa, and me.

It seems Lady Karina is training in the desert training site with virtual golems.

I've informed Zena-san and Liza who got left behind in the Weasel Empire

that I'll come back once I'm done here.

"Really? I think it's normal for a king to make his nation prosperous though?"

"B-but. For Ancestor King-sama to say such thing."

The princess put her hands on her mouth, shocked at Hikaru's statement.

"The eastern end of the continent where the weasels live is a poor land, I don't think they would have survived if they hadn't done that you know?"

"Well~ they do say that 『poverty dulls the wit』, so I also agree on that part--"

"Wait, of course I do think violating the taboo is a problem okay?"

While listening to Hikaru and Arisa's conversation, I calm down Sera who seems like she can't vent out her anger.

There's no need to use mind magic. I just pat Sera's shoulder who's sitting beside me, Sera who noticed her lost of composure takes a deep breath and leans her head on my shoulder, calming down.

"And, what are you going to do Master?"

"I want to collect a bit more information from the 『Room of Truth』, after that I'll pull back."

If the emperor understands that violating the taboo might mean fighting the gods, then I don't need to be noisy from outside. I don't intend to intervene on their domestic affairs.

I'm going to send some kind of surveillance though as I'd hate it if they launch the nuclear weapon here.

"You won't prevent it?"

"Yeah, even if I announce the thing about taboo to the people there, I'd only be treated like an insane madman."

In fact, I saw such activities in the Imperial Capital.

Moreover, the people of Brains and the important people of the empire are participating in it despite knowing the danger of the taboo.

"Does that mean forsaking the citizens?"

"Satou-san won't ever do such a thing. If the God's divine punishment is about to ruin the people there, he will surely cause a miracle."

The one who reacted to the princess was Sera who clung to my arm. Arisa and Hikaru are flapping their mouths, having the position of defending me stolen from them.

As a matter of fact, there's an underground shelter under the Weasel Empire's imperial capital similar to the one in Shiga Kingdom's Royal and Duchy Capital, so they probably won't all die out even if the God's divine punishment happen.

If it looks dangerous, I'm thinking of evacuating the citizens to the sub-space with [Another World] magic.

Doing that should count as lifesaving, not intervention, so there's no problem.

"It'll be forestalled though."

"Isn't it fine? In this world there's a lot of people who don't understand what's important until the damage happens."

"Un, building Shiga Kingdom was also tough.... For Sharlick-kun and the others."

Arisa and Hikaru approved at my self-ridicule.

Even if I act preemptively, they'll most likely resent me saying, "You've gone and done unnecessary things" instead of being thankful as the result after all.



"Hee, so this is the 『《Dungeon Master Room》』."

"First time I'm in one."

Arisa and Hikaru are looking around the room curiously.

"What is this~?"

"It's glittering nodesu!"

"Pretty."

"A, aaa-! You can't touch that!"

The other girls are also loitering around here and there.

Pochi and Nana seem to be the type who, 'for now let's push', when they found a button, Core Two stop them whenever they're about to push something.

『Master, please don't let outsiders inside the <<Dungeon Master Room>>.』

"They're all my relatives."

『--There is no problem if they're your relatives.』

My random excuse was accepted.

Looks like Dungeon Cores are unexpectedly flexible.

"Huh? The main core calls Master by 'Goshujinsama'?"

『As a result of the analysis of the information from Core Two, that way of calling seemed to be of the majority, so it's been changed.』

Dungeon Core cordially replied Arisa's question.

While still being expressionless, Nana nodded, looking somehow satisfied.

『Master, please confirm the present situation of the labyrinth.』

A graph showing the total sum of the Dungeon Point appeared in front of me.

"Uwa~, you really use Dungeon Point (DP) to manage a labyrinth."

"So torture room and prison exist?"

Arisa and Hikaru peeked from my sides and muttered.

『Master, is this arrangement weird? Would you like to return it to the state before the previous master's customization?』

The Dungeon Core seemed to have a doubt seeing their reactions, it timidly asked me.

Apparently, the current setting was set by the weasel demon lord.

"Can you show me that temporarily?"

『Yes.』

Three gauges are displayed; the amount of magic power, the amount of miasma and the amount of souls.

These are the general numerics needed for the dungeon, and the dungeon point is a notation for them.

"Show both of them side by side."

『Yes, Master.』

After saying that, Dungeon Core changed the display.

Quite a convenient interface. The part where I don't have to rewrite the code myself is wonderful.

"Oh my--Master updated the interface."

Soft feel of something voluminous stuck on my back.

It appears she's Core Two who has become adult sized.

"Mwu, guilty."

"Geh, loli girl became a kyonyuu." <TLN: huge breasts.>

Arisa was only surprised but Mia quickly pulled away the adult Core Two. I'd prefer if she was a bit slower.

"Hey look, Satou! This is amazing!"

"It really is."

Hikaru and the princess beckoned me while staring at a three-dimensional display.

I looked at them out of interest and saw endless stream of Chant Orb names in a column, numerical values were displayed on the right.

"Don't tell me--"

As I stared up at the 3D display, Core Two nodded.

"It's the list of item for the treasure chests with the needed dungeon point."

Come to think of it, my [Chant Orb] was found in a labyrinth.

That means I could have gotten the [Chant Orb] if I just controlled Seryuu City Dungeon Core huh.... It's just a postscript now though.

"--This is nice."

I can't make too many of them since it needs a lot of DP, but this looks usable to power up the girls and the executives of Echigoya Firm.

『Master, is it to your liking?』

"Yeah, I'll frequently come here a bit more."

Looking at the gauges earlier, I can supply the magic power and the miasma as much as needed, but I can't do anything about the soul gauge. There's no way I'm sacrificing the adventurers who enter the dungeon just to power up my companions.

At most, I can only change a boss room into a training room for the girls and bring monsters from outside there.

There's no skill that we urgently need right now anyway, I'll just take this slowly.

"Now then, it's about time we get back."

"Master, are you going somewhere?"

『Master, the place for Dungeon Master is here.』

When I said that, Core Two became teary eyed.

The Dungeon Core also asked me with tearful voice just like Core Two.

This looks as if I've done something bad.

"Then, you can just make a permanent gate to the solitary island palace here right?"

"Yup, then Core Two-chan can go back and forth and she won't get lonely will she?"

Hearing Arisa and Hikaru, Core Two looked up at the Dungeon Core.

『I understand. I will adopt that compromise.』

We've reached an agreement somehow so I make a gate that connects to the solitary island palace.

Core Two came with us as if it was natural, I'd need to prepare a bedroom for this child.

I don't mind her sleeping together with me if she were in her little girl figure, but I can't do that with her current kyonyuu body.

A brownie appeared from inside the mansion in a hurry.

"Satou-sama, you have a call from Echigoya Firm."

Huh? I should've already told them that I was going to Weasel Empire, did something happen in Echigoya Firm to expressly call me?

I entered the gate to Echigoya Firm alone after telling the girls that I was going to the Royal Capital for a bit.

15-26. God's Breath

*

Satou's here. It comes assailing like a collapsing sand hill, like pulling a block of Jenga, like an avalanche of the end. You can't always prevent it even if you know it's coming beforehand, just like disaster isn't it.



"Kuro-sama, you're back from Weasel Empire."

Just when I got to Echigoya Firm, the smile of Tifaliza, the bearer of an intelligent beautiful look, quickly found me.

"I got your call just when I got back. Did something happen?"

I don't think it's a pressing matter since it was not an urgent call, but Tifaliza only ever contacts me for the periodical report so it must be relatively important.

"Yes, from Makiwa Kingdom--"

The name of the country which we, disguised as dragon knights, protected appeared.

Did some problem arise regarding the refugee support and restoration?

"--Pipin contacted us."

Pipin is a former phantom thief and currently a slave who works as an intelligence operative of Echigoya Firm.

"If I'm not mistaken Pipin is...."

"Yes, he's accompanying Kei-sama and Sharururun as a backup."

Tifaliza supplemented faster than I could recall.

The former fake apostle and a reincarnated person, Kei was traveling to trace back the damages she had done with her Unique Skill due to her narrow mindedness.

"So something happened with either Kei or Sharururun?"

"Yes."

Tifaliza affirmed my question.

I looked at the two's names on the marker column while I was waiting for her answer.

It's alright, neither of them are injured.

"According to Pipin, Kei-sama is able to use holy magic."

"Hee, that's good to hear--"

I noticed the underlying problem as I indifferently congratulated.

"--is that true?"

"Yes, Pipin saw it himself."

Tifaliza gave an immediate answer.

"I'll be going to Makiwa Kingdom for a bit."

While hearing Tifaliza saying her farewell, "Please take care", and the noisy footsteps of the manager, I left Echigoya Firm behind.



I moved to the base point closest to Makiwa Kingdom where Kei and the others are with Unit Arrangement, and hesitated as to whether I should change my appearance.

Satou should be more appropriate if I want to congratulate her, but appearing out of nowhere like Kuro, visiting Dasles City which is on the back region of the kingdom I've never visited before will be a problem.

--Well, whatever.

Such a trivial thing won't be a problem soon.

I change into Satou appearance with Quickdress skill and get out of the mountain hut base.

"Would be nice if the storm doesn't come--"

I muttered while looking up at the cloudy sky as if hinting the future.

I can see Dasles city below.

"It seems Kei and the others are in Zaikuon Temple near the castle."

While using Magic Essence Camouflage, I teleport to the back of Zaikuon Temple which doesn't have a sign of life.

"Glory to God Zaikuon!"

"Come come! It's a celebration today!"

"Festival! Everybody dance today!"

There's a large crowd in front of the temple, the people are deliriously praising the God.

"The believers will come back now!"

"Umu umu, we can finally repair this temple."

I heard familiar voices from among the crowd.

--Kei."

"Sa-Satou-san?!"

Hearing my voice Kei wearing Zaikuon priest clothing turned at me in surprise.

"Is he your acquaintance Kei?"

"Yes, temple head-sama. He's Pe-Pe-Pen--err, Satou-san, a noble."

Apparently she doesn't remember my house name.

"Nice to meet you, temple head-sama. I'm Satou Pendragon. This may be trifling, but please accept my offering for the temple"

I hand over a small bag with 20 gold coins inside.

"Well well--how devout of you."

Temple head grinned widely at the glitter of the gold coins peeking from the bag's opening.

The gleeful-looking temple head led me and Kei to the temple's drawing room and served their treasured Makiwa tea.

The tea was insipid and only had the color for it, but I overcame it safely with the help of Poker Face skill.

"Temple head! We have a visitor."

"O-okay, wait for a bit."

It seems there's a lot of visitors today, there's already been many of them

coming during the little time we were talking.

According to the temple head, Kei had been making use of the [Compounding] skill she learned from her foster parent to help the restoration of Dasles City and gain believers.

"Temple head-sama, they're--"

Judging from the priest's expression, looks like they can't turn down the visitors this time.

"I will take my leave soon."

"I-Is that right. I'm very sorry for not being a good host."

"Could I talk a bit more with Kei?"

"Yes, of course you can."

We left the drawing room, seen off by the grateful temple head.

"Oh my, looks like we ended up chasing the preceding visitors away."

"Oh no, we were just about to leave ourselves."

The one in the corridor, led by the priest earlier, is the current acting Marquis Dasles, Miss Shelmina Dasles.

Looks like she's overworking herself, she's hiding the dark circles under her eyes with makeup.

"Your Excellency Marquis!"

"That's incorrect. I'm only acting as a substitute until uncle comes back."

Miss Shelmina denied the surprised temple head with a sour look on her face.

Shiga Kingdom should have told Makiwa Kingdom the passing of her uncle, Dwod Dasles the pyromaniac noble, but it seems they haven't announced it to the public yet.

They're probably going to do it once Dasles Marquisdom has been restored to a degree.

"Would you be the acting marquis? I'm Satou Pendragon from Shiga Kingdom. I'm stopping by as the people here have been taking care my acquaintance."

"Shiga Kingdom's?!"

Miss Shelmina was surprised to hear my introduction, and then she introduced herself as she would to a noble of a foreign country. She took my hand and began to talk about how grateful she was for the large airships Shiga Kingdom sent to help transporting the refugees.

"As one would expect from the country founded by Hero King Yamato-sama, even Shiga King is a noble person."

We helped them using Echigoya Firm name, but it appears she thinks it was Shiga King who unofficially sent the help.

We ended up talking while standing, so Kei and I were led back to the drawing room.

"Is the thing I heard from priest-dono earlier true?"

"Yes of course."

After she talked to me enough, miss Shelmina asked the temple head for a confirmation.

"It's true! ■ Bless"

"W-what are you--"

Kei happily stood up and chanted a holy magic spell.

Miss Shelmina's face stiffened at Kei's sudden action.

The blessing light rains down over the head of miss Shelmina the territory

land lord's candidate.

--This is bad.

I jump over the table with a speed rivaling short-range teleportation and push miss Shelmina down.

The people who didn't understand the situation voiced their surprise.

>[Holy Magic: Zaikuon Belief] Skill Acquired.

So the revival is true.

"Excuse me. Please forgive my discourtesy since it was an emergency."

"I-I'm saved. Thank you for your wise decision."

The only person who understood my action in this place, miss Shelmina said that with a pale face.

"Get away! You insolent rabble!"

"Stop it! Viscount is my lifesaver."

Miss Shelmina rebuked her enraged escort knight.

"Eh, um? You don't like God's blessing?"

I lightly whack the head of Kei who looks puzzled.

There are things that you shouldn't do even if they're out of good will.

--A land lord needs to control a City Core.

However, that has several conditions, and people who have received blessing from god are against one those conditions.

Of course, there's a trick that can be used to remove God's blessing by way of a ritual magic, however it seems that needs a huge amount of cost and

time to perform.

"Kei, you shouldn't bless someone without their consent. There are people who have pledged their faith to another God."

The temple head admonished Kei in an easy to understand manner in my place.

"Putting aside the mean, I certainly saw the actuation of a holy magic. That holy symbol is certainly--"

Miss Shelmina tidied her clothes, coughed once and said that. Looks like she's not going to pursue Kei's rash action.

"--the same as the one in the temple. So God Zaikuon has really been revived."

Miss Shelmina clearly stated the words I hesitated to say out loud.

That's right, Kei already had holy magic skill from the beginning. However, Kei couldn't use that holy magic even if she chanted the right spell.

Because the source of her holy magic, God Zaikuon had died.

And now.

Kei is able to use holy magic.

In other words, God Zaikuon the source of the holy magic has been revived.

Nevertheless--it's fast.

Once, Demi God-mode Aze-san told me.

"When they had just arrived at this world, God Zaikuon and God Garleon challenged the Dragon God and got killed, however they were revived in 1000 years."

But, if that's the truth, then God Zaikuon who was killed 30 years ago revived too fast.

"Then, we will double the amount of the current offering, in exchange please send priests to the free medical building."

"Double the amount now--"

The temple head frowned to hear miss Shelmina.

"Could you get it back to the same amount as 30 years ago at least?"

"Unfortunately, right now the restoration takes top priority."

Miss Shelmina shook her head at the temple head's entreatment.

Their financial is probably in a bad shape since the king seems to hardly assist.

I'll send some fund through Echigoya Firm at an appropriate time.



"Is Viscount Pendragon staying in the temple?"

"I'm not, now that I've met Kei, I'm thinking of departing Dasles City by today's end."

I only came here to say [Congratulation] to Kei after all, and I had confirmed the revival of God Zaikuon.

There's no need to stay here for long.

--Nn? Red luminous points are reflected on the Radar.

"But! I was thinking of holding a party to welcome Viscount Pendragon...."

Miss Shelmina spoke regrettably.

Yet she's not going to forcefully detain me.

Welcoming a noble of a foreign country is probably going to hit their finance hard.

I open the map and confirm the identities of the red points while talking with miss Shelmina.

They're nothing to be afraid about.

They're level 20 small fries, the points that need special mentions are only their [Fiend Drug Overdose] states and that they're people that belong to the crime guild [Cannibal Snake].

If I'm not mistaken, [Cannibal Snake] are the bunch who led the refugees and did some terrorism at the neighboring Silga Kingdom.

--Viscount-sama! Right, black overcoat, behind a child!"

I heard Pipin's voice from beyond the crowd.

Looks like he's warning me about the owner of the red point reflected on the radar.

--Tch."

"Uwaaa"

A man in black overcoat who's using a kid as a shield assaults miss Shelmina with a dagger.

The guard who was going to cover miss Shelmina was rammed by another man from the flank.

It seems they slipped into the temple's crowd.

"Sharu!"

"--Did you call?"

With Kei's shout, a beauty jumped down the roof and landed on the black overcoat man's back.

She's Sharururun, a former phantom chivalrous thief, now a member of Echigoya Firm whom I, as Kuro, tasked to guard Kei.

A different man with brown overcoat behind the smashed man came assaulting while his body was transforming.

The brown overcoat man blocks Sharururun's dagger with his transformed claws

"Monster?"

"Uwaaaa, it's a monster!"

The members of [Cannibal Snake] who were hiding themselves in the crowd stirred a panic with loud voices.

--This is bad.

I pull miss Shelmina's hand to keep her away from danger and kick the small man who stealthily attacked with a dagger.

I invoke the [Calm Field] from magic column while I'm at it and stop the surroundings from panicking.

After that, I stun the [Cannibal Snake] members with the highly stealthy [Stun Hand].

It's a faulty magic that's easy to block if there's no level difference, but that's not the case if I use it.

"V-viscount Pendragon. I-I'm glad that you saved me, but could you please let your hands go now?"

Miss Shelmina appealed with a red face in my arm.
Oops, I forgot that I was still embracing her.

"Shelmina-sama! There's no mistake, this tattoo is of the 『Cannibal Snake』."

"I thought uncle had annihilated them all, so there are some remains."

The guard who inspected the man defeated by Sharururun said that.

"Viscount Pendragon, and the woman over there, thank you for your assistance. I will be sure to reward you later."

"No need for thanks. I only helped Kei."

Sharururun curtly brushed off miss Shelmina.
Offended by her attitude, the guard is glaring at Sharururun.

Kei who sensed the worsening atmosphere points at the sky while looking like she realized something.

"Look look! Sunbeam!"

Kei is pointing at beautiful light streaming between the thick cloud.

"It's like the sky is also celebrating God's revival."

Kei spoke with an unnaturally bright tone to break the ice.
Lured by Kei's smile, everyone smiles.

Mysterious toll of a bell can be heard out of nowhere.

"What a beautiful sound."

I can feel the superior skill of the bell craftsman from the tone of the deep calm toll.

I wonder if I should put a bell in the solitary island palace too?

I ask miss Shelmina while thinking that.

"Is this from the castle's bell?"

"I-it's not, I've never heard such a beautiful sound either."

Yet, miss Shelmina returned a negative.

--Well now?

If she who has lived her whole life in Dasles City doesn't know, then where does this sound of bell come from?

My question is quickly answered.

In the worst possible way.

<<TAKE HEED>>

An intimidating voice descended from the sky.

It's like hearing several kinds of language at the same time.

Sounds of rustling sound and soil reached my ears.

Everybody besides me have fallen prostrates with their foreheads on the

ground.

Even the land lord candidate, miss Shelmina is not an exception.

<<TAKE HEED>>

The voice descended from the sky once again.

Looks like it has begun.

15-27. Divine Punishment

*

Satou's here. The term Divine Punishment reminds me of the Bible, but the sayings; god's wrath, or [hit by retribution] and various allegories exist in Japan.

I've never suffered from divine punishment and god's wrath firsthand though.



<<<TAKE HEED>>>

Intimidating voices descended from the sky three times.

Oracle skill was added to my Skill Column.

Apparently, those are divine messages from the Gods.

Several words--nay, a word that had several meanings reached my mind directly.

Apparently, Gods hold a conversation not through voices but by notifying a lot of people directly.

After a moment of silence, the main subject begins--.

<<<TABOO>>>

<<<TABOO>>>

<<<TABOO>>>

Not just one, several Gods seemed to announce it together.

<<<TABOO>>><<<WEASEL>>><<<TABOO>>><<<INSOLENCE>>>

<<<TABOO>>><<<RUINATION>>><<<TABOO>>><<<DAMNATION>>>
<<<TABOO>>><<<EXECUTION>>><<<DEPRAVITY>>><<<RETRIBUTION>>>
<<<FAITH>>><<<INCITE>>><<<PEACE>>>

How do I say this, it feels like a hysteric person who can't explain well because they're overcome by their emotion.

Or maybe it's like listening to a badly tuned crossed radio?

Voices of agony leaked from the people.

It seems the intense chains of images are tormenting them.

Yet, none stands up, every one of them is enduring the pain.

It probably means that their awe toward the Gods are just that strong.

I'm a bit intrigued as to why I am fine.

The toll of the bell stopped before long, and the torrential images that came along with the Gods' divine messages ended.

Some words I don't quite understand were mixed in but I think there's no mistake that it's generally, "Divine punishment will befall Weasel Empire that has violated the taboo."

However, the way it was told intrigues me.

The Unknown little girl I met in my fight with the Dog-head before was able to converse normally.

--Perhaps, the ones earlier were not Gods, but something that pretended to be Gods?

Many people have fainted, while the stout-hearted ones begin to stand up unsteadily.

I'm a bit hesitant to leave behind Kei, miss Shelmina and the others, but

please let me off with just sprinkling healing magic here.

I move to where Liza and Zena-san are staying in Weasel Empire using Unit Arrangement.



"Master!"

"Sa-Satou-san, this is terrible!"

"Oh good, you two are safe."

Liza and Zena-san who noticed me came rushing.

They seem to be fine thanks to their high levels, but all the maids in the building have fainted.

For now, I'll secure their safety first before grasping the information in Weasel Empire.

I go back to the solitary island palace with the two.

"Satou."

"Liza~?"

"Welcome back nanodesu."

The youth troupe welcomed us immediately once we got back to the solitary island palace.

"Huh? Master?"

Arisa's carefree look seems odd to me.

"Did the Gods' divine message not reach here?"

"Hoe? What's that--"

Arisa who looked dumbfounded dropped the rice cracker in her mouth midway.

Apparently it didn't.

To think it can even prevent the Gods' interference, asking Yuika to set up the barrier was the right choice.

--Don't tell me, the divine punishment for Weasel Empire was carried out?"

Please do something about the rice cracker crumbs around your mouth before putting on your serious face.

I affirm it, wipe Arisa's mouth and take everyone to the living room.

And then, an urgent call from Echigoya Firm came.

I use [Tactic Call] to connect Manager and Tifaliza.

『I already know about the Gods' divine messages. If there's any problem in our branch offices and the areas around Shiga Kingdom, report to me through the Urgent Call at your discretion.』

『Understood, Kuro-sama.』

『Then we will begin to gather intelligence and the analysis.』

Manager asked me to hold when I was going to cut off the call.

『Kuro-sama, I have a request. I'd like to grant the right for the branch managers of Echigoya branch offices to provide the accumulated goods. Will it be alright?』

『Of course. I give you the full privilege of the whole Echigoya Firm. I'm counting on you Elterina.』

『Y-yes! Kuro-sama!! I will do my utmost to meet your expectations!』

Manager replied powerfully at my slightly irresponsible lines of leaving it all to her.

Entrusting Echigoya Firm to her and Tifaliza should be fine.

I remember one thing and reconnect to Tifaliza.

『Tifaliza, I forgot something. Record the branch offices which reported the divine messages.』

『--Acknowledged.』

Wonder what?

Am I imagining things or Tifaliza seemed a bit sullen or rather, astounded. Well, it's probably not a big deal, I'll go see her directly when I find some time.

I cut the call and sit on one of the chair in the living room.

All regular members of the solitary island palace are already here. Along with the irregular members, demon lord Shizuka and the brownie maids.



"Somethings that seem to be Gods' divine messages came in Makiwa Kingdom earlier."

"Gods' divine messages? It's not an oracle received by Miko?"

Sera asked as I began to talk.

"Yea, voices came descending from the cloud."

Of course, I checked the cloud and above it but found no one there.
At least according to the map.

"Why is it Makiwa Kingdom? Didn't Satou-sama go to Weasel Empire?"

"I got a report saying that Kei the former fake apostle was able to use God Zaikuon's holy magic, so I went there to check on her."

I answered the princess's question.

"Wasn't God Zaikuon killed by Dragon God-sama 30 years ago? Isn't the revival too fast no matter how look at it?"

"The reason why it's so fast is unclear. I saw Kei using God Zaikuon's holy magic with my own eyes. The revival is probably true."

I look at everyone while replying Hikaru.

Is there no more question?

"And, what were the divine messages about?"

"Aa, it was not in a common spoken language, I guess it was like images accompanied by words?"

Arisa urged me to go ahead so I got back to the real issue.

I told the words I heard back then as accurately as possible to everyone.
Mainly for Sera.

"Is there any difference to when Sera-san received an oracle?"

"Besides the parts about several overlapping voices and for someone aside from Oracle Miko being able to hear it, it's mostly the same."

Sera answered after pondering a bit.

I got [Oracle] skill when those divine messages fell from the sky, but I don't plan to put skill points and activate it.

However, it looks useful when I need to negotiate with Gods in the future. If I just grasp the God World, the sub space where they live during our conversation, it also seems possible for me to go there and talk directly.

"So the divine punishment will fall on Weasel Empire right?"

"That's probably correct."

There are other problems besides that.

I can't help but think that the [Execution], [Depravity], and [Retribution] parts in the divine messages refer to the surrounding countries that have left the Weasel Empire alone.

The [Faith], [Incite], and [Peace] after those come off as, "Peace will come if you pray to the gods begging for forgiveness."

If that's true, then it's possible there are also calamities that require, [prayers to the gods].

"Is it, my fault?"

Sera looks at me as if relying on me.

Judging from the timing, I don't think the reason is because of Sera's visit to the Weasel Empire's amusement park.

If someone with the Oracle skill can unconditionally reach the Gods, then the little girl who was already living in the slum should be the trigger instead.

"Isn't it Weasel Empire's own fault?"

"But still, for the common people to be judged together with the emperor...."

Sera shook her head at Arisa's follow up.

"It's alright. I will help the people."

Arisa and Hikaru stood up in shock to hear me.

"Wait! You're going to fight Gods?"

"That's impossible Ichirou-nii! No matter how strong you are, against god is no good."

Do I look that belligerent?

Also, Hikaru was too surprised she called my name in the solitary island palace by mistake.

"I'm not going to fight Gods okay."

Sera openly looks relieved after I said that.

Of course, that applies to Arisa and the others too.

"If the divine punishment looks like it'll mass slaughter the people, I'm going to evacuate them to the subspace using the forbidden spell."

The magic power I've stocked in the holy swords look like it'll be all used up cause I'll probably need to use a humongous amount of MP, but I can just recharge it at the Ether Vein in the Void Sky.

I've been only consuming magic power lately, the bill from neglecting to replenish the supply comes biting.

I cut off my words and look at everyone.

Now then, I've told them the situations and my plans.

"Now then, about what we're going to do here on--Sera-san."

"Yes!"

"Could Sera-san go to Tenion temple in the Duchy Capital and once again

receive an oracle regarding this matter?"

"I understand. I'll go ask Head Miko-sama--apprentice miko Lili for the permission to use the Sanctuary."

I'm sending Zena-san and Lady Karina to guard Sera.

This means Zena-san would be traveling again, but she accepted it heartily.

"Princess Shistina, Hikaru and Team Pendragon are to stand by in the solitary island palace. I think the call for dispatch will come suddenly, so please relax as much as possible."

It was quite an unreasonable order, but everyone consented without complaining.

I'm planning to give Hikaru, Arisa and demon lord Shizuka a reason to stay in the palace even in this emergency.

There's the information about how people with God's Fragment are unable to go against Gods after all.

While thinking and pigeonholing myself, demon lord Shizuka ask me.

"Do I need to do something?"

"Yeah, I'm sorry but please stay here in the solitary island palace for a while."

"Fragments?"

"Yeah, that's right. I might ask you to help me like I did recently."

I asked demon lord Shizuka.

There's a lot of reincarnated people in Weasel Empire.

It's possible that there are some among them who have overused their Unique Skills and on the verge of becoming a demon lord.

In case that happens, her ability to remove Unique Skill from her familiar will be essential.

"Alright, then let's do a relaxing sea fishing contest!"

"Aye aye sir~?"

"Pochi will definitely catch parrot fish today nodesu!"

"Then I will catch some black-tailed gull."

Everyone harmoniously left the room per Arisa's command.

Arisa peeked her face on the door.

"『Protect your life』 okay!"

This time, Hikaru peeked behind Arisa.

"Don't forget about 『Don't be rash』 too okay."

I don't think there's any need to use Japanese language there, still I answer them, "Of course" and move away with Unit Arrangement.

The destination is Weasel Empire--.

In order to confirm the execution of the divine punishment and to browse the slates.

15-28. Divine Punishment (2), the Power of Science

*

<<<TAKE HEED>>>

Intimidating voices descended from the sky.

"It has begun at last."

"Umu, faster than predicted."

The emperor put his folded finger on his chin.

The court ladies are helping him since his hands cannot reach his fat-covered body.

And for some reason, he's wearing round glasses that reflect mysterious light on his nose.

Tactician Touya creased his eyebrows, thinking he had seen that pose somewhere.

Apparently, it reminded him of something.

"Playtime is over you know."

Tactician Touya thinks.

Perhaps the size of a reincarnated person's vessel depends on the profundity of their actions.

"Don't get your knickers in a knot."

The emperor waved his other hand that was on the handrail to end the talk and looked around the throne room.

The God's influence doesn't seem to reach here, the ministers inside the room aren't prostrating themselves despite looking anxious.

"The God-proof Barrier left behind by the ancient kingdom is quite excellent."

"This will be a solace for the people who sacrificed their lives exploring the ruin."

Tactician Touya nodded at the emperor.

Even though they couldn't find the underground sea city of the ancient magic kingdom, the Artifact they found in the underground ruin of an ancient empire on the western desert demonstrated enough power.

"How about Kuro--no, Hero Nanashi?"

"Kana the 『Insightful』 tried looking for him, but he has disappeared leaving his followers behind. We've sent a platoon of Temple Knights to arrest them."

Common sense in the empire would dictate that it's an excessive force just to arrest two people, but the emperor nodded with a face that looked like it was obvious.

"Matching the oracle huh... As we thought, that person is really--"

"Yeah, it's most likely true."

Tactician Touya affirmed the emperor who was speaking with a sorrowful face.

There's no one here who chides him for interrupting the emperor.

Most of the ministers are looking up at the dim rays in the sky.

"Crepuscular rays huh."

"With such a scenery. Say it more elegantly, like, it's angel's ladder or

something."

The emperor criticized tactician Touya.

"That expression may be appropriate, but it's ill-omened."

Tactician Touya points at one of the dim rays and speaks.

"Look, the angel--no, the god's apostle shows itself up."

"So that's apostle.... It doesn't look like a person even if it doesn't have wings."

The apostle who looks like a silver cone calmly descends inside the dim ray.

It seems to be descending to the area near the science armory outside the imperial capital.

"Looks like it has the angel halo."

There's a blinking golden light halo formed by unlimited symbols above the cone.

"Well then, shall we begin too?"

"I give you the permission. Dispose of those who call themselves Gods."

By the emperor's command, tactician Touya puts up his bishop's staff and instruct the generals and the ministers.

"Generals, go with the special special science vehicle corps and flying corps to intercept the cone."

"Understood!"

The fully motivated weaselkin generals are rushing out of the room while shaking the decorations on their chest.

"Gather the Temple Knights in the palace."

"Tactician-dono! Give us the permission to intercept too!"

"I will not! Your opponent will personally show up."

"It can't be--"

Tactician Touya puts up his hand to stop the captain from speaking anymore and nods.

"Chief of security bureau, I entrust you the right to command soldiers inside Imperial Capital. Quickly evacuate the refugees to the nearest underground shelters."

"Acknowledged. Leave the populace's safety to us."

A male human with a villainous face salutes at tactician Touya and runs off to carry out his duty.

"Tactician-dono, would the underground be safe? Our opponents are Gods and their henchmen--"

The leaders of the house of lords came before tactician Touya.

Flattery are showing on their servile faces. The matter they have in mind is themselves--and their relatives self-protection.

"We've prepared three large airships in the Imperial Capital's airport. Ride on them with your relatives and other influential nobles and evacuate to the Saga Empire."

However, tactician Touya tells the leaders that preparation is everything.

"As expected of tactician-dono!"

"You've even foreseen that this will happen! Then Her Royal Highnesses will too?"

"They're your relatives huh. Then they can go together with you. We're

racing against time. You'd do good to hurry."

He nods at the leaders who are fully eager to desert their country and urges them to hurry escape as if driving them away.

"Just how many will arrive at Saga Empire...."

"I don't care. Now the people who will obstruct our fight have disappeared."

At the knight captain's words, tactician Touya shook his head, expelling the trifle out of his mind.

"Now then, just how many of our hands would be bitten off?"

After saying that, the lips under his mask warped fearlessly.



"So that's His Majesty's enemy!"

From the open hatch of a running tank, a vehicle captain scowled at the floating silver cone.

"It's shining something!"

Before the soldiers who were running on the side could finish speaking, a light resembling light magic's [Laser] shot out and mowed down one of the fort-like armory in the distant.

"Hmph, like that can break through the steel wall that's thicker than a common fortress city's--"

In the middle of the vehicle captain's talk, a roaring sound and flame arose, burning cloud of dust came up from the ground hit by the light earlier.

"W-woow, the hell was that."

The vehicle captain is looking at the scene with a dumbfounded face. The defensive wall of the thick armory that renders even the armor of the tank he's riding on meaningless was torn off in an instant. The tank he's riding on is as good as having no armor. It can't be helped for him to lose his fighting spirit.

"Don't falter! We're invoking the Magic Eater!"

The commanding officer who was riding on parallel beside him encouraged the cowering vehicle captain. Understanding what he meant, life returned on the vehicle captain's eyes.

"Here they come! The Magic Eater Birds!"

Twin-engine aircrafts equipped with disk-like Magic Eater Invokers appeared on the horizon.

The strange noise of the Magic Eater activation echoed together with the propellers and the engines sounds in the battlefield.

"Ooo, that cone bastard is slanting!"

The apostle who was standing still in the air began to fall.

"All vehicles stop! Prepare for bombardment, retake your aim after the first volley, fire three volleys of armor-piercing shells in succession. After that, stand by and prepare the high-explosive shells!"

The captain's voice reached every vehicle from the radio.

"Normal shell loading, complete!"

"Third special vehicle here, normal shell loading, complete!"

The radio personnel conveyed the reports he got from the loading personnels to the commanding officer.

At the same time, the apostle fell to the ground in the view of the vehicle captain who was peeking outside.

"All vehicles, start the bombardment."

"Fireeee!"

The main cannon of the special vehicles spouted fire, lead cannonballs hit the area around the apostle, raising cloud of dust.

"Correcting elevation--three to below, one to the left, a bit back to the right. Aiming complete."

"Armor piercing shells loading complete."

"Fireeeee!"

The armor piercing shells shot by the special vehicles sunk into the apostle one after another.



"Who could've thought physical attacks would be this effective."

The emperor muttered while looking at the scene before his eyes.

The plan to contain the apostle with Magic Eater and tear the apostle with the special vehicles' cannons seems to be working well.

The light magicians and the space magicians from the imperial court

magicians are showing the battlefield to the people in the throne room. The imperial court magicians who usually don't get along are cooperating to capture image from outside the Magic Eater's range.

"Lead and iron have low interference against magic. Furthermore, we're using that in the special vehicle's corps' armor piercing shells."

"Hmph, fantasy against fantasy huh."

The bone of lesser dragons and the white warhead of the armor-piercing shells floated in the emperor's mind.

"His Majesty! We got a call from Magyuba City! An apostle has appeared!"

"Mogeiba City also called, they said 『Appearance of a silver cone. One third of the city has become white chloride』."

Similar reports from other cities came one after another.

"His Majesty! We've confirmed the apostle invasion on the opposite side of Imperial Capital! Their number is--"

"What is it, say it."

"--12. 12 apostles have appeared!"

Hearing the communication officer's words tinged with despair, the people in the throne room gather their line of sight at the emperor and tactician Touya as if imploring them.

"Looks like the opponent is serious."

"However, we're yet to go all-out either."

Tactician talked to the king and then turned toward the anxious-looking people.

"Get out the remaining 『Magic Eater Birds』. I allow the deployment of Temple Knights. Don't forget the D equipment!"

"Acknowledged."

Entrusted with the order by the tactician, the captain turns toward the emperor.

"Our loyalty to His Majesty! For the empire's victory and everlasting glory!"

The captain raised his spear and took a knightly bow to the emperor and then he left the room commanding the Temple Knights.

"How about the 『Whistling Arrow of Awakening』?"

"We just got the materials. We can't possibly make it that fast."

The tactician and the emperor exchanged words in a room sparse of people.

"Hahhahha! Don't lump me together with you Tactician!"

A man with loud footsteps showed up in the throne room that was ruled by silence.

The man wearing a white robe unsuited in the palace is the director of Brains.

"Director huh? What are you here for."

"I have a report for His Majesty."

He eluded the tactician's question and stepped forward before the emperor.

"We've completed the preparation for the 『Whistling Arrow of Awakening』, should we launch it as planned?"

Brains Director's frankness doesn't change even in front of the emperor.

"Of course. Push forward while there's still no obstacle."

"Okey! Prompt decision! I'm really mesmerized by that side of yours~"

Brains Director winked with a jestful expression, took out a hand radio and ordered the launch of the [Whistling Arrow of Awakening].

"What kind of magic did you use in such a short notice?"

Tactician caught the shoulder of the director who was going to pass through him and asked for his trick.

"I don't use no magic. It's human wisdom. I thought this was going to happen so I had it finished enough that we just needed to put the Darkness Crystal as the core and the Philosopher's Stone for the fuel. Working ahead of the schedule so that you don't fall into a death march is the basic of the basic."

"Is that so--"

The director shakes off the tactician's hands, and then tactician's words reach the ears of the director who's stretching his white robe to his ears while walking.

"--With this, His Majesty's plan takes a step forward."

"Hahn?"

The director stopped and asked the meaning of the tactician's words. However, the tactician fell silent, only the words of the feverish emperor reached his ears.

"Now, go! Break the seal of the Moon's Demon God and wake the sleeping god."



"This is bad! The steering golem of the Moonfaring Ship won't activate!"

"What should we do? Should we stop the launching sequence?"

"But, we can't possibly prepare a new golem now. It'll take at least three days at the latest even if we put together the 『Brains』's spare."

The [Brains] members are having a violent discussion inside the control tower near the rocket's launch pad.

"Is this really the result of our all-night works everyday."

"Damn with science almighty. Weren't you always lecturing us pompously? Bring out some good idea!"

"What are we doing quarreling against ourselves! There must be something that can be done!"

An apostle, crumbling from the tank cannons, is approaching the launch pad.

The apostle is probably aiming for the armory and the rocket launch pad from the start.

If this keeps up, there's no doubt that the rocket will be destroyed before the tanks defeat the apostle.

"I'll go!"

An apprentice girl in the control tower declared that while swaying her purple ponytail.

The only one who can ride the spaceship is only her with her small build.

"Becoming an astronaut has always been my dream in my previous life."

"You can't! The Moonfaring Ship's fuel is only enough for a one-way trip. Moreover, the core will explode on arrival. You can't, absolutely."

"I don't care. I also have good luck, though it's not as good as His Majesty Emperor."

--Sorry."

The supervisor who opposed the girl who put up a bravado yielded to the unwavering eyes of the girl and gave her the permission.

"Maintenance division! Put every food and water into the 『Magic Bag』! Also stuff the oxygen cylinders there! And all of the remaining Darkness Crystal fragments! And don't you forget the gravity propeller prototype!"

The supervisor gave orders through the radio to increase the girl's chance of return even by 1%.

"What's that? ...Uh oh! Someone is clinging to the rocket."

"Priest clothing? --No way!"

One of the people in the control tower gave a warning, and the supervisor screamed after looking at it through the binoculars.



"Patriarch-sama, just another step. It's our duty as God Zaikuon believers to crush the scheme of the demon lord's adherents. I'll accomplish mine soon."

A young man with long purple hair wearing priest clothing muttered in delirium.

He was the only one who arrived here among his allies who invaded the rocket launch pad during the chaos.

"Kuhi, kuhihihhi. Hand, my hand is trembling... I've to take the god's medicine."

The man took a small bottle from his breast pocket, but he couldn't open it with his trembling hands, he finally used his teeth to open the cap. He drank the liquid inside the bottle, but he couldn't swallow it well because of his trembling hand, it was spilling out around his mouth.

"Kuhi, kuhihihihhi. kuhi, **KUHIHHHIkuhiHIHI**"

The man stopped trembling, but some strange noises that didn't sound human were mixed among his voice.

"You over there! Stop!"

A soldier carrying a gun stopped him, the man turned around with eyes clad in purple light.

"gunJJJg**GUGGGGUUUNNNNN**"

"M-monster!"

Before the soldier could even pull his gun's trigger, the blood from the remaining lower part of his body scattered in that place. It was caused by the blade that extended from the man's purplish shadow.

"s-sOONpatriarch**SASASAMAMAAAMMMM**"

The back of the man who had began to climb the rocket was burbling as if it was a different creature.



"D-demon lord--"

One of the men wearing priest clothing on top of a hill muttered when he

saw a purple giant that appeared on the rocket's launch pad.
The rocket broke easily, the launch pad and the falling control tower
became submerged in fire.

"Priest Bebenbe, that's wrong. He is a holy king devoted to the great God
Zaikuon. A holy warrior who has come to purify this land smeared in
taboo."

"Patriarch-sama."

The patriarch who sent the fanatic man to his death said some made-up
story.

No one besides his mistress knows that he secretly despises reincarnated
people with their purple hair.

"We have our own role to fulfill. Let us go."

"Yes, Patriarch-sama."

The fanatics go down the stair toward a narrow underground ritual site
behind the hill.

"Gentlemen, my gratitude for following me until today."

""Patriarch-sama.""

"We will now hold the last ritual. For the glory of God Zaikuon."

""For the glory of God Zaikuon.""

The fanatics are chanting the most secret art that's only been handed
down to the priest king of the God Zaikuon Country destroyed in the past.

--<<Invoke Deity>>.

An art to descend the great God into a body.

Even if the art is successful, the life and souls, everything of the people
who chanted them will be annihilated, it's a forbidden ritual magic.

No one knows whether the secret art will be successful since the success rate up until now is exceedingly rare.

However, if it's successful--.

Another crisis would befall Weasel Empire.

15-29. Divine Punishment (3), Satou's Identity

*

Satou's here. I remember reading a mystery novel where the protagonist was the culprit all along in the past, but I recalled throwing the book away due to the forced outcome. I really think the author should have foreshadowed it to the readers, so they could understand.



"Huh? There are traces of people searching the house."

When I came to the doghouse which only had its frame remaining using Unit Arrangement, the guest house we were staying at looked as if it was pillaged by burglars.

Our dummy traveling bags are cut, the content inside have been scattered on the floor.

The doghouse where I came out of is also broken in a corner of the room. It seems the people who searched here were quite violent.

For some reason, there's a holy symbol of God Zaikuon painted on a wall with a cross mark on top of it.

I don't quite understand what it is about, but I see that they hate God Zaikuon.

"For now, let's read the rest of the slates--"

I opened the Map while muttering alone and realized that it was not the time to do that.

There's a luminous point showing [UNKNOWN] on the Map. My Crisis Perception isn't kicking in so it's probably the god's apostle. Apparently, the situation has changed since I got back to the solitary island palace.

I checked just in case, but I don't see them in Makiwa Kingdom and the neighboring countries.

Of course, the same with Shiga Kingdom where my acquaintances are.

They're not in Saga Empire either, I should just leave the countries I'm not too involved in alone.

"--For now, they seem to be on equal ground."

I closed the Map and checked the battlefield with the space magic's [Remote View], a magic to see afar.

It seems there are some casualties among the military personnels, but I don't plan to be overprotective toward professional soldiers.

Nevertheless, I never thought that the apostle would look like a strange silver cone.

How the apostle look wasn't described in the slates you see.

Moreover, there were lots of blurred words and inadequate depictions since it seems Troll Demon Lord wasn't an author in his previous life.

『--Steel Cutting Slash!』

I saw a familiar knight in the Remote View.

It seems they've invoked the Magic Eater, they're not fighting with magic but with cannonballs and physical attacks.

The apostle that was hurt by the cannonballs and the Temple Knights'

white swords restored itself like rewinding a video.

The Weasel Empire's Magic Eaters probably don't have enough power to interfere with the magic power inside the apostle's body.

『This will finish you off! Pentagonagram Tearing Slash!』

『Stop, Liedill! Techniques that use magic power are unusable!』

Lady Liedill who was going to use her finisher was hit by the apostle's feeler and got knocked down.

She seemed sturdier than I imagined, she evaded the second feeler while unsteadily getting up.

Lady Liedill is an airhead like always.

I sent a cheer for her in my mind.

"Oops, forget about that."

I muttered alone and got right back on track.

Then I opened my Map and checked on the surrounding cities, turned out other apostles had appeared there too.

The Imperial Capital's populace have evacuated to the underground shelters so they're probably going to be fine even if I leave them alone, but the opponent is a god's apostle.

There's a possibility that they have the same attack power as the [Demon God's Offshoots] I encountered in Shiga Kingdom's capital.

I take a holy sword that works as a magic power reserve out of my Storage and use [Another World].

Similar to what I did in the Dejima Island's Labyrinth before, I copy the underground shelters and abduct the people into it.

I'm sorry for doing it without asking their approvals, but please regard it

as an emergency evacuation.

I'll put them back once the turmoil is over.

"Wonder if the magic power is enough to evacuate all the cities in Weasel Empire?"

The Magic Crystal Pillar I got during the incident with Demon Lord Shin floated in my mind.

"Looks like I can finish this without using the magic power in the Magic Crystal Pillar I'm keeping as an insurance."

Now then, let's go to the next city.



"There are more god's apostles now."

When I had finished evacuating the Weasel Empire's populace and got back to the capital, the apostle had increased from one to 13.

I was able to evacuate most people but a smoke car used by the wealthy to flee in one of the cities had been turned into a salt object, and most of the cities' defense forces were already annihilated; there were a lot of people I couldn't save too.

It's impossible to completely save them all, and in the first place, my heart isn't going to ache even if professional soldiers and the statesmen who abandoned the people they should have protected die.

Several airplanes and large passenger planes were attacked by Rocket Trees and flying monsters.

I also caught sight of monsters who should have been controlled by screws

gaining freedom and rebelling at some cities' lines of defense.

I couldn't exactly neglect that so I helped them dealing with the monsters a bit.

"Oops, I probably shouldn't leave that one alone."

A separated apostle is approaching a rocket launch pad where there are civilians.

I close the Map and exit the mansion to prevent that.

There's a pillar of purple light beside the rocket.

"Geh, there's even a demon lord."

--This is way too chaotic, Weasel Empire's Imperial Capital.

Using space magic forbidden spell <<Aport an Object>>, I retrieve the people in the rocket launch pad and the control room.

"W-where is this?"

"W-who are you?"

"Hero Nanashi."

I only explained that much to the confused people.

"H-hero?!"

"Why is a pawn of God Parion here!"

Oops, looks like hero's worth is at an all time low in Weasel Empire.

No, Hero Hayato was welcomed in Dejima Island, there's a possibility that it's just a part of people in the Imperial Capital who keep that perception.

"Now then, I have no time to chat. Take shelter together with the capital's

people."

I open the gate to the sub-space and throw them one by one inside using [Magic Hand].

I left only the purple haired girl since she was in a critical state as her body was covered in purple light.

I absorb the surplus magic power from her, maximize the Spirit Light and tear off the miasma that binds her.

Contrary to what I thought, it was just an initial symptom, so I neutralized it easily.

"I don't have to remove her Unique Skill at this rate."

I send the girl to the same place as the people earlier and close the gate.

Now then, the critical situation continues, but since they're doing better than I thought, it doesn't seem like I need to intervene.

For now I'll go read the slates to collect information and see the emperor later.



--Here he is."

The moment I showed up in the room where the emperor was after I had finished gathering information, some unwelcoming words hit me.

With a wave of his hand, tactician Touya made the Temple Knights and officials who were in the room to withdraw.

Ignoring the sarcastic gaze of tactician Touya, I ask the emperor.

"I have two things to ask of you before we get to the main subject."

"Say it. You will have your answer if it's something I can tell."

Is it just my imagination or is his tone pricklier than yesterday.

"Have you read slates from recent times--about 100 years ago?"

"Of course."

"With your own eyes?"

"I can read ancient language from the age of gods just fine."

Fumu, in that case he should know the same thing as me if he's directly read it.

"Then, about his identity too?"

I asked the emperor while looking at tactician Touya.

"I do not know which identities you're referring to, but yes I know about both of them."

--Then I guess it's fine.

"Is that all?"

"Yeah, if you're not being deceived then it's fine."

After all, there are demon lords in my faction too.

"Then we will be asking ours."

After saying that, the emperor urged tactician Touya with his eyes.

"If you've already read the recent slates, then you can already guess what I am going to ask don't you?"

It's probably about me.

The recent slates were choke full of me.

For some reason the matter in sub-space starting from the solitary island palace, the events in the Dragon Valley and Elven Homes that are protected by barrier, and the things in void sky weren't recorded, but my activities as Nanashi were written profusely.

However, there was nothing about the fact that Satou and Nanashi are the same person.

I can easily imagine that he, with his intellect, should already realize that they're the same person.

Even so, there's no need for me to reveal it myself.

"What are you trying to say?"

"Playing dumb is futile. Viscount Satou Pendragon--"

I'm ignoring his questioning without relying on Poker Face skill.

"--Or perhaps, I should say it like this?"

Tactician Touya stops, takes off his mask and scowls at me as if he's instigating me.

Guessing that he's going to call me God Slayer, I put up a defense in my mind.

"One who challenges Dragon God--"

Just as I thought huh.

"--No matter how many times he was killed--"

Huh?

The turn of events seems strange somehow.

--One who continues to challenge. The eternal challenger--"

Not understanding what tactician Touya's intention is, I match my line of sight with his to probe for information.

--One of the seven Gods that arrived from another world together with the World Trees--"

Challenging dark purple light leaks from the depth of his eyes. Since that's a symptom of demon lord-fication, shouldn't you better calm down a bit?

I missed his words because I was thinking that.

--Eh? What?"

Thanks to that, I replied like I were a deaf-type protagonist. He apparently thought I was making fun of his decisive lines, color of anger were mixed in tactician Touya's eyes.

"I'll say it no matter how many times until you can no longer hide it."

Tactician Touya's eyeteeth begins to lengthen like fangs. Un, sorry about it. That's why, calm down.

"One who surpasses all principles, an existence outside of this world--"

Tactician Touyaa threw his arm inside the mantle, flipping it up and vigorously pointed his finger at me as if it was going to pierce my heart.

--God Zaikuon! That's your true identity."

15-30. Divine Punishment (4) Basis

*

Satou's here. There are people who, "know themselves worst.", and people who, "Know themselves best."

But, aren't the most numerous ones the people who make use of either case depending on the situation?



"What's wrong? Don't tell me you never thought that your true identity would be found out."

Tactician Touya is pointing at me with a triumphant look on his face.

"I'm not a God--You won't believe me even if I tell you that right?"

"Of course!"

Tactician Touya is full of confidence.

"Could you tell me what's your basis for thinking that I'm a God?"

After I said that, tactician Touya grins and begins to talk.

"There are too many mysteries surrounding you."

Tactician Touya calmly speaks as if he's a stage actor.

However, I'd like to be spared from his slightly narcissistic strange pose. I somehow feel that his preferences will match with Doghead's.

"The first entry about you in the slates is about your fight with the black

greater demon in Seryuu city."

That's certainly the case.

Of course, I'm written as [Silver Masked Hero] in the slates.

"Someone with a single-digit level couldn't have possibly won against a greater demon."

Un, I forgot to change my level in the Exchange Column at that time.

"You must be possessing some kind of concealment-type artifact. Or so we thought, thus we had to investigate your identity."

After saying that, tactician Touya peers into my eyes as if checking my reaction.

"However, even the most skilled people couldn't find any trace about you before you appeared in Seryuu City. Yes, so perfect we couldn't help but thought it was as if you suddenly came together with the 『Stars Fall』."

No no, I think I was transported at that time, so the suddenly appearing part is true.

"We played it safe and absolutely made sure to chase your whereabouts to prevent contact. And with each reports, we couldn't help but question the sanity of our informer."

Tactician Touya slowly shakes his head with his finger on his forehead. That gesture pisses me off somehow.

"Slaughtering senior greater demons one after another, and even easily beating the Golden Wild Boar King whose strength was famous among successive generations and the great monstrous fish Tovkezeera."

The one who defeated Tovkezeera was Hero Nanashi, there was no information about me being the same person as Hero Nanashi in the slates.

"Let alone them, you even defeated the strongest 『Ancient King Dog Head』-dono who was called the evil god and the offshoots of Demon God-sama."

--Nn? What's this?

I sensed something odd just now.

That sense of oddness disappeared before I could say it, but another question appeared instead.

"Isn't it said that no one besides Dragon God and Demon God have ever defeated Doghead?"

When I pointed that out, tactician Touya looked a bit disgruntled. Looks like he vaguely noticed that too.

"Hmph, it's most likely because it happened right after 『Ancient King Dog-Head』-dono had just revived so he was in a weakened state."

The Doghead beating was written humorously in the slates, but the detail as to how I actually defeated him wasn't depicted, and mysteriously, the little girl who intruded in my fight with the dog-head wasn't written at all.

"And, even though you had the power to defeat Doghead-dono, as weakened as he was, you bafflingly hid all of your achievements and continued your journey as a common man. You could have gained any kind of glory and fame if you just made it public, yet you only repeated your pleasure jaunts and philanthropic works."

Cause my main purpose is going on trips in another world.

"We racked our brains at your mysterious acts. However, everything came to light once we confirmed a certain phenomenon."

Tactician Touya's reasoning feels familiar to me somehow.
A deja vu of having your conjecture proven wrong.

"And? What is that phenomenon?"

I know that he's surely mistaken, but laughing at him would be too sad so I urged him to continue.

This is not because I pity him as a fellow sufferer of mistakes. Absolutely not.

"You can chantlessly teleport an impossible amount of things to an impossible distance away. However, that's fine and all. We thought that you were just hiding such a Unique Skill."

Is he talking about Unit Arrangement?

Since I can teleport considerably far away with space magic, wonder which one is it?

"However, it doesn't seem like you pay the compensation for it. Not magic power, not your soul, nothing!"

He shouldn't be able to know my magic power consumption, maybe he's referring to me teleporting way outside the limit without replenishment?

"Such a thing is not possible for someone who's been given god's fragment, someone who is just given a portion of the authority. Someone that can freely command such an absurdity at will is an existence outside the principle. In other words, only a God."

I see, so Unit Arrangement is that much of an absurd ability.

Come to think of it, when I experimented to see the limit, I could repeat it ad infinitum it stopped being funny, and I was also able to escape from the center of gravity many times.

"We also have other basis."

"And that is?"

Might as well listen to it all.

"--30 years."

What?

Did I miss him speaking again?

"Are you still playing dumb? It has only been 30 years since you were defeated and killed by Dragon God!"

Tactician Touya shouted irritatedly.

His fangs are about to reach a dangerous level, please calm down.

He seems to refer to God Zaikuon reviving even though it has only been 30 years since his dead.

"It's certainly strange. Please tell me the reason if you know why."

"Hmph, you're not going to admit that you're God Zaikuon until the end huh."

I mean, that's wrong.

"There's a true meaning in you not only piling up achievements as a fake hero but also hiding your philanthropic works."

With a [zubi] sound effect, tactician Touya points his finger at me while

taking a pose like he's leaning his back.

I almost impulsively shouted, "What'd you say!" out loud, but I held back. I had a feeling that he'd snap and turn into demon lord if I teased him like that.

"I have a proper hero title y'know?"

I let him to cool down by pointing out his mistake a bit.

"Yes, a true meaning!"

Tactician Touya completely ignored me and continued on. Can't be helped, I'll hear it till the end without doing unnecessary interruptions.

"What kind?"

"I'll only be preaching to the choir, but very well I'll have you hear it."

For now, I urged him to continue.

"The period of revival for a god that has died is fixed."

The weasel emperor is calmly glaring at me to not miss any of my gestures.

Unlike tactician Touya, it doesn't seem like he's entirely convinced that I'm God Zaikuon.

"However, there's also a way to shorten that."

Judging from the oracle I heard before going here, is it prayers?

"In order to shorten that, the most effective way is people's genuine prayers and devout piety. Awe and reverence can also shorten the revival

period but it is not as effective."

Such a detailed explanation isn't written on the slates.

Looks like tactician Touya has another source of information besides the slates.

"You should understand that playing dumb after this far is meaningless!"

Thin purple hair begins to grow on the bald head of tactician Touya. Apparently, he only shaved his head.

"In summary, what you want to say is--I gathered prayers and piety from the people by acting as Satou and Nanashi in order to hasten God Zaikuon's revival?"

"That's right!"

Swoosh, tactician Touya's hair lengthened into a straight long hair to his waist.

"You are the mortal frame of God Zaikuon. A split Mitama!"

I begin to think that my identity might really be God Zaikuon after this much of a grand declaration.

Of course that's a misdirected wrong deduction.

If what he said is the truth, then that means a split Mitama of God Zaikuon that's not even the main body defeated Doghead and the Demon God's offshoots.

It doesn't seem like I can get any more useful information, guess I'll stop keeping his nonsense company and leave here?



"Or perhaps you don't remember?"

Tactician Touya spoke with a slightly different mood when I was waiting for the right timing to leave.

He might have sensed that I didn't believe his deduction.
His tone somehow changes into that of a persuasion.

"Have you ever thought that your memories are inconsistent? Did it get cut off?"

--Mu.

I can't deny that.

My memories were interrupted between the time I fell asleep and awoke in younger body in the [Dragon's Valley].

The reason for my rejuvenation is unknown, who was the one who teleported me is also unknown.

"Don't you ever feel that your thought is being manipulated by someone?"

--Mumumu.

....Not never.

Although I can't confidently say that it has, I can't really recall the time when Hikaru disappeared.

Why did I think that her disappearance at the time was not a problem, and how I didn't think of Hikaru let alone worry about her until our reunion was also strange.

"Have you ever forgotten things that you intended to do before you realized?"

After being reunited with Hikaru I forgot to pursue that doubt further in spite of having it in my mind.

"Looks like I've hit the nail on the head."

Tactician's Touya triumphant look is infuriating.

However, the more I denied that impossibility, the more I doubt that maybe even that thought is an influence from an outside force.

Tactician Touya pursues further at my shaken heart.

"Admit it! Split Mitama of God Zaikuon!"

--Impossible.

However, my heart is swaying, unable to intelligently deny like earlier. The thought of my own memories and thought being manipulated brings anxiety and stress that have never arisen before in my heart.

Maybe.

Just maybe.

Is that--really the case?

『There's no way that's true isn't it?』

I heard a familiar voice in my ears.

That obviously disgusted-sounding voice had the power to blow away my worry in an instant.

『Calm down. My hero.』

"You're--"

Two small hands hug my neck together with a fleeting light snowfall-like sensation.

Those of the little girl who was in the painting.



--The little girl in the painting.

A mysterious being who appeared in the painting inside Duke Oyugock's castle and when I was being misled by Doghead Demon Lord.

Doghead Demon Lord called her [God Parion], she's shown as [UNKNOWN] like the Demon God's Offshoots on my AR reading.

"Who are you?"

『Me? I'm your princess. You're my hero. We're two birds who share a body and a pair of wings walking the eternity together--』 <TLN: An expression for 'a happily married couple'.>

Her clear comfortable voice similar to Lulu almost robs me of my consciousness.

I forgot how she evaded my question and ended up immersing myself in the sound of her words.

"Who are you talking to?"

"--Eh?"

Tactician Touya looks around at the surroundings suspiciously.

It seems the other people can't see her existence.

Since Doghead demon lord could, she seems to be able to choose who can see her.

"Did you manipulate my--"

She puts her little finger on my mouth midway.

『I only do what you desire. I will be there as you wish. If you cannot remember it, that means it's something the current you don't need. It will be naturally released when you really need it.』

Normally those sounded unbelievable, but for some reason, I felt like believing her without a doubt.

『Are you convinced?』

--Yea."

I nodded back at the girl.

The smiling little girl's body is becoming transparent.

Right, maybe she knows about it.

"Do you know the reason why God Zaikoun revived faster?"

I asked her that while feeling slightly impatient.

『Reason? Maybe the kids who didn't want the civilization to advance united? Because Divine Punishment can't happen unless all the seven Gods who arrived riding on the world trees assembled.』

--Huh? I felt something odd again.

『Look, my hero.』

A yellow light is spreading at the ground where the little girl pointed at. That was the place where a demon lord was fighting an apostle.

『A big battle-loving idiot has appeared.』

The yellow light becomes a huge person shape.
I think it's at least 100 meter tall?

The information of the person shape shown on my AR is the same as the little girl's--[UNKNOWN].

The same as the apostle, but it's clearly different.
Warnings from Crisis Perception is alarming enough to tighten my heart even though it's so far apart.

"That's, don't tell me--"

『It is. You can tell the other big idiots over there too.』

The little girl who was looking at the yellow person shape turned at me.

『Tell them, that's the Zaikuon you seek.』

"That's, God Zaikuon?"

"W-what'd you say!"

Tactician Touya heard my muttering.

"What do you want me to do?"

『--Nothing.』

The little girl gently smiles.
Her expression is like a mother, unsuited for her age.

『Do as you like, my hero. Do anything you like anytime you want.』

After saying that, the little girl disappeared in the air.
Her parting words sounded like an invitation from a devil or a dark god,
but I felt a deep affection for me in them.
I think that she's probably the one who summoned me to the [Dragon's
Valley].



"Say it! Who was here! No, what was here!"

Tactician Touya grasped my shoulder and forcibly turned me around.
And just when I was soaking in the lingering sensation, what a cruel guy.

"An unknown little girl."

"Little girl? --God Parion!"

Like I said, unknown.

"Touya. Whether he's a split body of God Zaikuon or not is trivial now."

The emperor pointed at the yellow person shape--God Zaikuon with his
line of sight.

"My fragments given by God are aching. There's no mistake that's a God--"

Is it just my imagination or is the weasel emperor swelling.

"--Our enemy."

The yellow light that makes up God Zaikuon is pulsing.

<<<DIVINE PUNISHMENT>>>

Heavy sense along with awe arrived directly in my brain.

The Imperial Capital and the special tank corps outside turned into salt, swallowed by white tsunami and disappeared.

"The Imperial Capital is turning white?"

"That's the divine punishment."

The Imperial Capital is turning white starting from the edge of the city.

Several purple pillars of light appeared in the slums.

Looks like several reincarnated people had turned into demon lords.

Even though I should have carried all the reincarnated people and [Brains] when I kidnapped the capital's people earlier, just where were they hiding....

"It seems demon lords don't turn into salt."

"Of course. That only works on the 『Being with Predestined Live (Mortal)』. It has no effect on the followers of Demon God, demon lords who are 『Immortal Beings』."

The weasel emperor looks at me.

"Hero Nanashi, it appears God's power is mightier than we expected. It is very likely that the people won't be protected from the divine punishment by merely hiding underground. Please carry them out if you have a shred of sympathy for our people."

"I left the people in the imperial castle, but I've saved the populace already."

"Is that right.... My gratitude, Hero Nanashi."

The emperor looked relieved when I told him that.

"What are you two going to do?"

Perhaps because of I saw that, I asked the weasel emperor and tactician Touya such a thing.

"It's good as long as the people are safe. However, I want to protect the underground burial mound. Protect it from the Gods' hands."

"Okay. I'll blockade it with a strong barrier."

It's not because I'm asked by martyr-like clear eyes.
I'm going to protect it since it's an important facility for me too.

"We will defeat the God."

The emperor who's wrapped in purple light easily stands up from the throne.

"As the great demon lord of this generation, I will challenge and slaughter the God."

The emperor presses both his hands on the ground and transforms into a purple beast.

"If I become a beast who's lost his reasoning after destroying the God, I'd like you to kill me with that anomalous strength of yours."

Looks like the emperor's determination is firm.

"Understood."

"Thank you. Hero Nanashi."

The emperor who has turned into a beast becomes huge and breaks through the tall ceiling of the throne room.

"We will defeat the God."

"I see."

Without cheering or stopping him, I see the emperor off.

"Are you not going?"

"My turn will be for the last. The role of this body is to raise the final big firework called Imperial Castle."

Tactician Touya replied me with some antique words midway.

He probably wants to draw a line for the rise of standard in their revolt against Gods.

"Explosion is romance. And there is no bigger romance than an explosion that drags a God with it don't you think?"

That reminds me, he's this kind of guy.

"You're right."

"Yeah, damn I am."

While looking at the fight between demon lords and the yellow person shape in the distant, tactician Touya laughs like he's yawning.

I felt insanity in his dark expression, sending chill down my spine.

There should be no need for me to see it until the end.

I should just come again once everything is over.

The bureaucrats and the court ladies who had stayed in the castle seemed to have left the capital using an escape VTOL.

The Temple Knights and soldiers are still fighting against the apostles even now.

--Farewell."

Muttering a good bye word that's unlike me, I go toward the seal of the burial mound.

I, who have finished all of my roles, leave the whitening dying Imperial Capital behind.

15-31. The Golden Knights' Deployment, Preparation (1)

*

Satou's here. I've seen manga that inform the readers with [This is ●●] as the title on the first page. I wonder if there would be people who mistook it for another work if that wasn't written?



"Master, so intense! At this rate I'll break."

Slender legs are wrapped around my waist, voluptuous hills are pushed on my face.

"Co-Core Two."

"Master, Master, Master."

I pat Core Two who seeks me maddeningly.

""GUILTY""

Arisa and Mia separate Core Two away from me.

"Master, Master, Master."

Core Two is frantically stretching her arms toward me even while being pinned by Hikaru and Lulu.

I stare back at her bewilderingly.

I received Core Two's intense hug the moment I got back to the Solitary

Island Palace with Unit Arrangement, thus I don't know why she's like this.

"What's wrong, Core Two?"

"Master, Master, Master."

Since she can't give any meaningful reply, I ask the girls for the situation while grasping her hand.

"Do you know what this is about?"

"Well? We had just gathered here after pausing the sea fishing contest because the brownies told us that Core Two seemed strange, so we don't really know."

"Maybe something's happening at Dejima's Dungeon?"

Following Arisa, Hikaru gave a reasonable opinion.

"Right, I'll go see it for a bit."

I use Unit Arrangement to move to the <<Dungeon Room>> of Dejima's Labyrinth.

"--What?"

The Dungeon Core is flickering intensely, the room is basked in red and blue light.

"Report the current situation!"

『Master, someone, is.』

The Core answered intermittently.

『From outside, i-invading, m-me.』

Apparently, the dungeon is getting hacked.

The hologram window displayed by the Core shows the current information of the labyrinth.

"It's trying to make the monsters go on a Stampede outside the labyrinth huh."

I'm guessing so from the displayed information.

"Oh no~?"

"It's a pinch-pench nanodesu."

When I looked at the direction of the familiar voices, I saw Tama and Pochi looking up at me from my shadow.

When their eyes met mine, they sank down into the shadow until around the eyes with a [We got found out] expression.

Looks like Tama followed me here with Shadow Ferry.

--Right then.

"Private Tama, Private Pochi! This is an emergency mission!"

"Aye!"

"Nanodesu!"

When I said that, the two jumped out of the shadow and waited with shupin poses.

"Annihilate the monsters overflowing from the labyrinth's entrance!"

"Aye aye Sir~?"

"Roger nanodesu."

I move the two to a small shrine near the labyrinth's entrance with Unit Arrangement.

The labyrinth and the labyrinth island are under my rule, so moving on

them is an easy task.

Alright, now the monsters have been taken care of.

『Mas, ter, su-support, pl-easesese』

"Got it."

I touch the Dungeon Core and directly connects to the Core's consciousness.

『<<<OBEY>>>--contradict with Master's orders.』

The state of someone's will fighting against Core flew to me.
It seems it's [Master] instead of [Goshujin-sama] inside Core's mind.

『<<<OBEY>>><<<PROVIDENCE>>><<<OBEY>>>--I-I won't ob-ey.』

Just as Core's said, the Dungeon Core seems to be under a heavy load.

"Core, turn the one connecting from outside over to me."

『<<<OBEY>>><<<SUPERIOR>>><<<OBEY>>>--Yes Master.』

After a light headache, the arrogant voices reached my mind directly.
A choice, [Requested by a being of higher-order. Do you want to obey?]
and YES/NO, appeared in the edge of my vision.
Of course it'd be no, but I'm not going to choose just yet.

This comes from some manga or anime--

『Only people who are prepared to get hacked hack.』

--Or so.

It might be a bit different, but it mostly sounds like that I think.

I trace back the faint Magic Essence that flows in the Dragon Vein.

It's quite far.

After going through several Magic Clumps, Miasma Caverns, and Sources, it's even further than those.

It's like a cracker that attacks through several network servers.

『<<<INSOLENCE>>><<<OBEY>>><<<TABOO>>>』

It seems the other side sensed that they were being traced back, threatening will streamed from the source of the interference.

It feels like the divine messages I heard in Makiwa Kingdom.
If I have to say it insolently, it [stinks of Gods].

"Irritating."

The unpleasant noise-like feeling in my mind was wiped out by that single word, and then I continue the trace with my cleared mind.

--Selbira's Labyrinth?

No, it's still even further.

When I pursue that further--.



"It fled huh."

The line was abruptly disconnected.

The trace I pursued completely disappeared there.

The Dragon Vein or Source it used to connect was probably physically destroyed.

『Master, thank you for your aid.』

"Nah, this much is nothing."

At this rate, there's a high chance that the other labyrinths are going to be forced into doing Stampede.

"Core, with my authority as the Dungeon Master, cut off the connection to the Dragon Vein. You're prohibited from reconnecting until I give you the permission."

『The connection has been cut off. 16 days remaining until Magic Essence is exhausted.』

Fumu, I thought Core would reject me, but it's expectedly obedient.

"What happens when you run out of the Magic Essence?"

『The Dungeon Core will enter Sleep Mode, all activities of the labyrinth will stop. This includes the volcanic restraint.』

That reminds me, the labyrinth here does that eh.

『It is possible to extend the active time to 721 days if the volcanic restraint is suspended. Would you like to suspend the volcanic restraint?』

"No don't."

If the volcanic activities resumed, the labyrinth island will become uninhabitable, and it should have a big effect on the crops and fishing industry of the the nearby Dejima Island.

I ponder a bit--.

"I'll bring Magic Essence from another place with Space Magic. It's a bit thick, and the flow rate is strong, but endure it."

『Yes Master』

Please, stop mixing shyness in your thought when you have that synthetic voice.

I connect to the Magic Essence convergent in the Elemental Stone Refinery in the Void Sky with space magic and pour it to the Dungeon Core straight.

『Master, amazing, Master, Master, be gentler, Master, I'm breaking, Master.』

When I heard the entreating coquettish voice of Core, I understood that Core and Core Two have the same personality.

The voice stir up my sadistic side, but I'd feel bad bullying it so I suppress the rate of flow to half.

While I'm at it, I also charge the holy swords used for magic storages that I've been neglecting.

The amount of Magic Essence is plentiful in exchange of the slower flow rate, so I charge 100 holy swords at once.

It has become much more easier to do it than when I was charging with my own hands.

Thanks to that I forgot to recharge though.

"Finished~?"

"Mission Complete nanodesu."

Tama and Pochi came back just when I started the magic charging.

"Little meat~?"

"The monsters here are all kananomo, it's no joy nodesu."

Kananomo? Did she mean Kanamono (metal utensils)?

Certainly, most of them are golems and monsters with no substances, there's only a few that are edible.

"Salamander~?"

"Pochi caught a Dungeon Crocodile nodesu."

Pochi and Tama fill the room with bodies of monsters on the floor and look up at me with a "praise me" face.

"What a big catch. Should I make hamburg steak of Dungeon Crocodile and Salamander for the lunch today?"

"Great~?"

"Pochi is very very happy nodesu!"

When I suggested that while patting their heads, the two jumped up in joy. I've made it so that Core can cut the charging connection through space magic itself, so I can leave it to charge by itself.

"Core, cut the connection once you've charged enough magic power."

『Y-yes, Master, ah, Master, haahaa, Master.』

Core's reply was amorous somehow.

"Don't forget to contact Core Two when your magic power has been depleted to half."

『Yes Masteeer』

Will it really be alright....

I've set a method for safety just in case.

I suspect that Core would try to charge magic power until it broke somehow.



"Welcome back, Satou."

"Sera has requested her return from Duchy Capital."

When I got back to the solitary island palace, the girls welcomed me with complicated faces.

Arisa reported in a business-like manner while averting her eyes from the object on the floor.

Lulu's and Liza's faces are red.

When I look at Princess Shistina, she averts her eyes with reddened face.

It was probably because they saw the antics of the object on the floor, Core Two who's lightly breathing with an expression like she's just done it.

She must have been connected to the Dungeon Core and directly received the sensation from over there.

It seems a woman with such an appearance is still within the limit for Demon Lord Shizuka, her loose lips are just slightly loosened.

I'd like to believe that she doesn't have any strange thought for the girls here.

"Mwu?"

I pat the head of Mia who's nursing Core Two while looking like she doesn't really understand and bring everyone besides Core Two to the living room.

I'll leave Core Two to the experienced married brownies.

"How was over there?"

"Wait, before that, I'll call Sera-san and the others back here first."

After confirming with Sera, I called the three dispatched to the Duchy Capital back here with Unit Arrangement.

"We're back."

"Good work."

I wait for the three to sit on the sofa and continue the talk.

"Please report your situation first."

"Yes, allow me to tell you the conclusion first of all. The Gods are 『Giving the divine punishment to Weasel Empire, and for the surrounding nations' sins of being negligent to monitor Weasel Empire--』"

Arisa and Hikaru began to boo when Sera got to the [sins of being negligent to monitor].

I agree with them, but we can't continue like this so I silence them.

"Will be given similar punishment』, so it's said. When I asked what kind of punishment it would be, another oracle descended, 『The effect of the Blessing that holds back the monsters in one place will be annulled』."

"What is 『Blessing that holds back the monsters』, so I ask."

Nana who had the same question as me asked.

"It's a Blessing that keeps monsters from coming out of the Monster Dominions and Labyrinths through God's authority."

"Is that a Blessing?"

"Yes, it is not commonly known, but we're taught that in the Temples."

Sera replied Arisa's question with the face of a clergywoman.

"Isn't the Miasma density the reason why monsters don't come out of their dominions and labyrinths?"

"Un, the scholars from my time also postulated such thesis."

Princess Shistina and Hikaru raised an objection at the temple's common sense.

"T-that shouldn't be--"

Denied of her doctrine, Sera immediately reacted and stood up.

"Calm down, Sera-san. I don't think Sera-san is telling a lie."

"Satou-san."

I calm Sera down and make her sit again.

"I think the fact that monsters prefer places with high miasma concentration is true. However, populated areas, slums and graveyards are also places with high enough miasma concentration."

I learned this after getting Miasma Sight skill, there were stagnated places that resembled the inside of a labyrinth.

"Places with high miasma concentration does not always equal places with monsters, though I can't say that it's certain since undeads sometimes do appear in graveyards."

I wait for everyone to chew the words before continuing.

Excluding Tama, Pochi and Lady Karina who looked sleepy from all the difficult talk, the other girls seemed to understand.

"In other words, I think a power that attract monsters to labyrinths and

magic lumps does exist."

Leaving aside as to whether that's a God's Blessings or not--

"And, if the Gods have some kind of mean to erase that power, there's a high chance that Stampedes will happen in various places."

--Stampedes are certain to happen in various places.

However, I can't confirm whether the ones who hack Dungeon Cores to cause the Stampedes are the Gods.

It's very gray.

"Oh no!"

"Nanodesu!"

Tama and Pochi reacted to the word Stampede and stood up on the sofa. When Liza made a "Zip your mouth" gesture at them, the two quietly sat back on the sofa at the same time.

For some reason, they're taking the [Shellfish pose] by hugging their knees and rounding up.

"Of course Golden Knights will deploy right?"

"Of course."

"Alrightt!"

When I affirmed Arisa's question, she stood up on the sofa like Tama and Pochi earlier and raised her fist to the sky.

--Arisa."

"Nay nein."

Losing to Lulu's sad line of sight, Arisa took the shellfish pose beside Tama and Pochi to reflect on her action.

Lady Karina looks like she wants to join in too somehow, but please hold yourself back because that's not a pose a young lady should take.

"Now then, before the Golden Knights deployment, I want to talk about the Weasel Empire I saw."

After I said that, everyone straightened themselves with a serious face. Of course, that included the three who had become shellfish.

15-32. The Golden Knights' Deployment, Preparation (2)

*

Satou's here. I think ending something without a fight is the best. However, I do think that's not the same as not resisting at all. It's necessary to take the appropriate actions against an opponent who invades further the more you yield.



"First, let's start from the most important matter. I have saved most of the general populace, reincarnated and transported people of Weasel Kingdom."

"Thank God...."

Sera who looked worried sighed in relief.

"As expected of my--"

"Mwu."

"--our Master, right."

Arisa changed her praise slightly due to Mia's dissatisfied mutter.

Many soldiers and the privileged class who abandoned the people and escaped the cities lost their lives, but since no one asked about it, I didn't mention it.

"All the cities in Weasel Empire besides the capital and Dejima Island have been turned into white salt by the God's Apostles, becoming ruins with no one left."

"You kiddin' me--"

Except for Tama and Pochi who don't really understand, everyone becomes pale.

Only Arisa is composed enough to joke.

"And, only the Temple Knights and Science Corps in the empire's capital have any kind of success in repulsing them."

Sera reproached the people opposing God's Apostles, muttering in a low voice, "How impious....", but I decided to pretend that I didn't hear it since it was something that couldn't be helped for religious people.

"In addition, demon lords manifested near the imperial capital and barged into the battle."

"But why?"

"--Who knows?"

Arisa's question is natural, but I too don't know the reason why.

There were some reincarnated people at the places where the demon lords manifested, so I couldn't help but think that maybe they were forced to turn into demon lords by the God's Apostles.

They probably didn't drink Demon Lord Orb like Shin boy did in Shiga Capital when he turned into a demon lord.

"And mysteriously, even God Zaikuon participated in that three-pronged melee."

"Haaaaa? But why!"

"I didn't ask the reason--"

I shake my head while soothing the peevish Arisa.

"--A wise man does not court danger, you see."

God Zaikuon might tell me if I interviewed him directly, but it felt like I would raise a battle flag if I made some strange connection with him.

"--That's quite true. Better not step on a tiger's tail."

It seemed Arisa remembered the thing she said to me when I went to Weasel Empire, she nodded in consent.

"For God Zaikuon to descend and personally deliver the Divine Punishment.... Unbelievable."

"You're right. My old friends said that the cost for a God to descend was extremely big, so they absolutely won't descend."

Hikaru affirmed Sera's muttering.

"Yes, even in the history of the temples, excepting the Invoke Deity ritual magic, the only record of the advent was 20.000 years ago during the war against the Dog-head Evil God."

God Zaikuon should be killed by the Dragon God 30 years ago, did he not manifest in the world at that time?

Or is it merely because it's not written in the [History of Temples]?

It bothers me a bit, think I'll ask about it to Aze-san when I visit Boruenan Forest later.

The one who told me that was the female intelligence agent in Selbira the labyrinth city, but since she got the information from Zaikuon God's priest who in turn learned it from an oracle granted to a miko of another God, she probably doesn't know much more even if I ask her.

"Then, there was probably a priest that could perform the ritual magic."

The old Zaikuon priest I saw in the slum quarters flash on my mind.

If I'm not mistaken, the reincarnated person who was with him called him Patriarch Bodrazog or something.

I checked and found that him and his sympathizers weren't among the empire people I rescued.

--God's damnation is near! People! Pray to God, ask for mercy!

The old priest Bodrazog was giving that sermon with flaming madness in his eyes.

That fanatic seemed like he was capable of sacrificing his and his followers' lives as the compensation for the God's advent.

Well, whatever.

Guessing won't tell me if it's right or not, and the person concerned is already dead even if I know anyway.

I put the subject back on track.

"And, the weasel emperor became a demon lord and challenged God Zaikuon in order to have the final duel against the God who destroyed his country."

I doubt that weasel emperor would fight from the front.

He's probably going to fight by throwing all the resources he has in hands and do all kinds of craftiness.

"The emperor became a demon lord and battled God Zaikuon huh.... Can he win?"

"I think it's probably impossible."

I shook my head at Arisa's question.

In the first place, the Unique Skills of the emperor who became a demon

lord aren't suited for battle.

Even if he uses it with all his wisdom, damaging the God is probably the best he could do.

The [Self Destruct System] that the tactician prepared is probably their last hope.

"That's the situation right now. I don't intend to interfere as long as the God doesn't target here."

There's neither merit nor duty for me to go against the God and jeopardize my friends.

I omitted the matter about my identity being found out by the tactician and the weasel emperor, and the true identity of Tactician Touya as Elf Sage Trazayuya.

I can just tell them about those matters during a chat over some tea later.



"Now then, let's decide on the deployment of the Golden Knights."

I clapped my hands to reset everyone's consciousness, and began to talk about the way to prevent the Monster Stampede calamity news that Sera brought with her.

"I'm thinking of dispatching people to Selbira City and Seryuu City which have labyrinths ahead of time, other than those places, the rescue squad will be deployed whenever we get a report from the branch offices of Echigoya Firm."

I tell and look at the girls.

No one seems to object.

"Sa-Satou-san--Me too."

"Of course, I want Zena-san to go to Seryuu city. Pochi will go with you with her Dragon Steed, Lyuryu, so you should be fine even if a greater demon and dungeon master come attacking."

There are Echigoya Golem units and Zena-san's little brother, Chevalier Marientail over there, and they've thinned the labyrinth's monsters quite a bit, so deploying there a bit late should be alright.

"I'd like to entrust Labyrinth City Selbira to Nana and Mia."

We've also thinned the monsters there and there's a lot of combat forces like the guildmaster and the explorers.

There should be no real problem with Nana's defensive power and Mia's spirit magic.

"U-um, what about Yowok Kingdom's labyrinth?"

Lulu asked timidly.

There's a revived labyrinth in the hometown of Lulu and Arisa that was invaded by Yowok Kingdom.

Even though she probably doesn't have many good memories about the place, she probably would hate it if her hometown is infringed by monsters.

"Right. Someone should go there too. Lulu, could you go?"

"Y-yes!"

"Then, I also--"

"You can't Arisa, I have another duty for you."

The duty thing is a lie.

Arisa and Hikaru can't be deployed outside since I've acquired the information, [People who hold God's Fragment cannot go against God], in the Weasel Empire.

I don't know whether that's true or not, but looking at the abnormal rate of demon lord occurrence in the Weasel Empire, I feel that it's not necessarily wrong.

I'd like to believe that they should be fine with the anti-mind attack items I made for them, but even it's fine against God's Apostles, I feel that it won't quite suffice against God.

Besides, Lulu should be fine alone.

Lulu demonstrates the strongest firepower at long range, but she also has the next strongest defensive equipment after Nana, can use Force Magic up until the advanced level, and has refined her self-defense skill enough to completely handle a Shiga Eight Sword.

She's not standing out due to her shy nature, but she's the all rounder who can fight at multiple range among Team Pendragon.

She's probably going to be fine alone as long as the opponent isn't a demon lord class.

Of course, I'll be sending some brownies and accompanying Golem units with her as a support though.

"Hikaru, please ask Tenryuu to exterminate Monster Stampede if she finds one near Fujisan Mountains later."

I can open a gate that connects to the Heavenly Dragon Shrine and let her talk with Tenryuu from there.

Or maybe I should ask Arisa to connect them with her [<<World Phone Neo>>]?

"Okay! So Arisa and me are in the house-sitting team?"

"Yeah, sorry, but your turn will come a bit later."

Tenryuu and the other dragons should be able to cover the vast [Monster Domain] area along Fujisan Mountains.

"Shizuka too--"

"Okay okay, let's wait for our turn while playing cards here."

Demon lord Shizuka has the important role of extracting the [God's Fragment] from the demon lords that have occurred in various places, so she has to stay here regardless of the reason.

The remaining ones are Liza, Tama, Lady Karina, Sera and the princess.

"Let's change the plan for a bit--"

At first I planned for us to wait in the Solitary Island Palace until we get a report from Echigoya Firm, but since each of them is probably worried about their hometown and places they're related to, I've decided to dispatch them to each of those places.

I can bring them back to this palace with Unit Arrangement anytime anyway, I'll ask Tama and Liza to be the emergency dispatch units.

--Karina-sama will be going to Munio Earldom which has many 『Monster Domains』 neighboring it."

"I-I understand! I will protect Munio Earldom with all my might."

Lady Karina pushed her fist on her breast and accepted the order.

The demonic breasts are transforming, I feel like they're shooting a dangerous level of charm wave.

『We will not forget to protect Satou-dono's and Liza-dono's posts either.』

"Thank you, Raka."

An attentive [<<Intelligent Item>>] is wonderful.

"Sera-san, please go to the Duchy Capital where the ruin of a labyrinth sleeps."

"Yes, this time I will protect Duchy Capital and its people whom Satou-san has saved before."

Sera stares at me with eyes full of determination.

I feel like she's going to work hard alone, so I tell her not to forget to contact me before things get dangerous.

I'm going to give [Small Light Ship] to the two to assist their movement. It's a high speed dimensional airship. I leave the steering to the brownie flying squadrons.

"Am I going to the Royal Capital?"

"Yes, due to the frequent disasters in Shiga Kingdom, the populace are most likely anxious. Therefore, please parade around the capital with strong looking Golem Knights to encourage the people."

I can't let her go to the front line after all.

"Echigoya Firm will prepare the prototype <<Hundred Throne>> that can operate a maximum of 1024 non-combative search type drone golems, please use it during the parade."

"My! It's the magic tool for control that Arisa back then jokingly said to appear in 『Manga』 isn't it! How very wonderful!"

The princess who isn't really pleased with jewels and dresses gets into magic books and this kind of romance hard.

The prototype is quite big, so a small airship will carry it.

Since the princess's room is big and the floor is sturdy, it should be able to

hold the throne.

In addition, I asked her to search for enemies around the capital after the parade.

"What about Tama~?"

Tama asked with a worried look.

"Tama will wait with Liza for now okay."

"Aye~"

I pat the disappointed Tama's head and nod at Liza.

"Don't worry, Your turn will come soon enough."

"Aye!"

"Yes, Master."

I went to Boruenan Forest while everyone was preparing for their dispatch.



"Aze, long time no see."

"Satou"

Having come to the tree house in Boruenan Forest, I felt happy when I saw my beloved.

I gently embrace her and get healed by her warmth.

"Satou-san. Please reserve such a shameful act for when you've gained divinity."

"Hello Lua-san."

If it comes to this, I should've left it at that when Tactician Touya accused me of being God Zaikuon.

--Wait, I can't.

It'll just get found out immediately.

I separate myself and then Aze-san stares at me as if she's steeled herself.

"I really shouldn't tell you this, but just a little while ago we got a notice from Gods during the Sacred Tree Meeting."

Sacred Tree meeting is a meeting where the representative high elves from each World Trees in the world gather.

"It was a notice about the execution of Divine Punishment toward Weaselkin Empire and.... and the absolvment of Demon God's blessings in the monster domains and the labyrinths in the whole world. And we were warned not to tell this and not to give support to the king of every country....."

I see, so that's why there wasn't any contact from Boruenan Forest to the Solitary Island Palace at all.

"Dispatching Light Ships too, giving information too, everything has been banned."

"Then, should I return the Brownies dispatched at the Solitary Island Palace too?"

"No, only the elves were prohibited. We can't put up words for you, but spriggans and leprechauns who are good at fight, and also trolls--"

I put a finger on Aze-san's lip.

I'd be happy for reinforcement, but I want to avoid worsening Aze-san's position.

It seems she's barely ever interacted with Gods, but they're still acquaintances for hundreds millions of years after all.

"Having the brownies there are quite enough."

"But, those children are not good at fighting."

"Fighting isn't the only thing needed. The girls can fight with all their power on the front line precisely because of the brownies' support."

It'll troublesome in various ways if the brownies aren't there.

Putting aside cooking, we've left the brownies to do washing, bedmaking and taking care of the garden after all.



"I'm not sure if Aze knows--"

I asked about the information I heard from the female intelligence agent of Selbira City, "God Zaikuon incurred the Dragon God's anger and was killed 30 years ago."

"Yes, that's the truth."

"Do you know where he was killed?"

"It's probably at the Dragon's Valley or a Sanctuary somewhere?"

Looks like Aze-san doesn't know where he was killed either.

"By Sanctuary, do you mean the same place as the one in the Duchy Capital's Tenion Temple?"

"It's a place made from a torn part of the God World where the seven

pillar Gods are living. I think it's similar to the 『Another World (Sub-space)』 Satou showed me before? I have never been there but from what I heard from high elves who had visited there, it was a wonderful place filled with pure air and thick divinity."

I see, so they fought in an <<Instant Battlefield>>-like place similar to the temporary battle area in games.

It must be a place where they can fight with full power without affecting other places.

Right, lastly I have to tell them about Trazayuya-shi.

I ask them to call Mia's mother, which is also Trazayuya-shi's daughter, Lilinatoa-san.

"It's been a while Satou-san. Been awhile! Is Mia healthy? She must healthy right."

"Yes, she's very healthy."

I greet Lilinatoa-san who's in contrast with the taciturn Mia and then get to the subject once I clear my throat with some tea.

"--Toya was?"

"Yes, he was living as the tactician of Weasel Empire known as Touya."

"....I see."

Lilinatoa-san casted her eyes down while talking in a short sentence similar to Mia.

She probably also knows that Divine Punishment has befallen Weasel Empire.

"Thank you for telling me. My gratitude for you."

Her smile looks forced, but I'll leave the consoling role to her husband,

Lamisauya-shi.

"Have you told Giril and Dohar?"

"No, I have yet to."

"Then I'll go tell Giril who's in Boruenan Forest myself."

I thanked Aze-san for the offer and left Boruenan forest.

I also have to tell Elder Dohar in Bolhart city, but they probably don't have the leeway to have a reminiscent talk right now either, I'll talk to him later.

When I got back to the Solitary Island Palace, a report from Echigoya Firm informed us of the Monster Stampedes.

"It's growing tense."

"You're right--"

I ponder for a bit.

"--Everyone, listen to me."

It might be difficult to keep the secret while fighting this time.

Although there's no need to actively proclaim it, you don't need to worry about getting found out.

So I tell the girls.

"Is that alright?"

"Yea, if you worry about it and end up forsaking a life you could have saved, you'll be regretting it forever right?"

"Un, that's true but--"

Arisa probably wants to say that it'll make the sightseeing tour harder.

"It's alright. We can use illusion during the tour and we can visit anywhere without problem by disguising ourselves."

It's been proven when we visited Weasel Empire in animal costumes.

I look at everyone and say.

"Now, it's time for the Golden Knights' deployment."

I send the girls clad in silver and golden glittering armors one after another to the battlefields.

At this time, even though I had noticed the contradiction between, the thing little girl in painting told me, "Divine Punishment can't happen unless all the seven Gods who arrived riding on the world trees assembled." and the story about Divine Punishment I learned from the weasel emperor and the slates--I didn't realize the significance of that--.

I only learned about that a little bit later.

--At the day Weasel Empire disappeared from this continent.

15-33. The Golden Knights' Deployment

(1)

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※It's not from Satou's POV this time

"Ou, ye finished too?"

"Yaaas, got me some ee-edamame, gonna share 'em with others later."

"Thank ye. Got some smoked cheese in our home, take 'em with ya."

"Lookin' forward to 'em."

The villagers are having a carefree conversation.

This place is one of the mountains north of Shiga Kingdom that goes to the Fujisan Mountains, in the territory of Earl Muno.

One of the villages governed by Viceroy Brighton of Muno Earldom.

"Imma go to the city to sell some cheese, you selling too?"

"Gonna sell some dried fig. Ther' popular cos they said the viceroy's wife likes it."

"Lina-sama ain't the wife of viceroy-sama they said y'know."

"Was that a'ight? Ain't she gonna marry him once she got old enough?"

"Ya, she's pretty 'fter all, an' they said she's a daughter of some upper noble-sama."

Since Viceroy Brighton is often absent, the daughter of Viscount Emlin, Lina Emlin is working as a magistrate in viceroy's place.

At first she was just a figurehead, but now she's shown her quick-wittedness, she can govern as a viceroy with no problem.

It's a pity that this fact is rarely passed on to the viceroy, Viscount Pendragon.

Their carefree life was disturbed by the God's Divine Messages.
Monsters that rarely show themselves began to attack the villages one after another.

However, there is no damage to the villagers and the domestic animals.

"Dog God-sama, thank yee."

"Cat God-sama too, thank ya."

The golems protecting the villages took care of the coming monsters,
many villages held meat festivals for revering.

The people call and worship the golems as Gods, and the viceroy as Great God.

The Gods are seeking prayers by way of Divine Punishment, but it seems the people in this territory are far detached from that.



"KARI--err, KUNGFU KIIIIIIICK!"

The kungfu kick of a silver knight sank into the torso of a Hydra that attacked Muno City.

A four headed snake attacks the silver knight who's stopped moving.

Looks like she has successfully sealed her original technique name,
[Karina Kick], thanks to the repeated special trainings.

"Impertinent, desuwa!"

The silver knight jumps off the torso and then does a rotating kick with her hands on the ground, mowing down the snake heads.

Another head grew back on the stump of the cut neck.

"Pochi and Tama would be happy if they're here desuwa."

She's sure that they would happily say, "Unlimited meat~?", "All you can eat nanodesu."

『Silver Kungfu! Don't let your guard down! The tail is coming.』

The deadly poisonous tail attacked the Silver Knight Kungfu like a spear, but a scale-like light appeared in front of the knight right before it hit and stopped the tail.

It was an act that would expose the identity of Silver Knight Kungfu if there were people who saw it, but her special characteristic in the form of her breasts are already too pressing obvious, it just feels too little too late instead.

"Kungfu Spiral Punch!"

Whirlpool of blue light appears on Silver Knight Kungfu's arms, every time her fists gouge the hydra's torso, its tissue is destroyed such that its regeneration can't keep up.

The huge hydra used up all its strength before long, becoming a corpse in front of Muno City's gate.

The army of Muno Earldom is favorably fighting against the other monsters.

While no small feats were attributed to Chevalier Zotol for reorganizing the territorial army and the vice-captain Chevalier Hauto's commands, it's mostly thanks to the magic cannons and improved fire wands supplied by Echigoya Firm and the upgraded equipment and magic swords the soldiers carry.

"Next, it's just cleaning up the remnants right?"

A small dimensional airship that looks like a miniaturized light ship appears from the gap in space in front of the muttering Silver Knight Kungfu.

"Good work. Silver Kungfu-sama. We're going to the next battlefield, so please get on."

A small pilot peeking from the hatch prompted Silver Knight Kungfu. The pilot is a brownie wearing futuristic-looking flight uniform.



"Good work, Karina-sama."

"T-thank you, desuwa."

In front of the Silver Knight Kungfu--Karina who was resting in the living room of the Solitary Island Palace, her loved one presented her with some sweet yellow orange juice.

"How was Muno City?"

"Y-Yes, I defeated them with no problem."

Satou's line of sight was directed toward the silver ornament she wore.

『The city suffers no big damage. Karina-dono defeated some slightly strong Hydras. We didn't meet any master of dominion class of monsters.』

The one replying was the ornament--[<<Intelligent Item>>] Raka.

Raka's master, Karina is prioritizing the resupply of sugar content.

Her bracelet made a ringing sound when he had her fill.

"Looks like we've arrived at the next battlefield desuwa."

"I'll prepare many things for dinner, please be careful not to get too late okay."

"Yes, I'm looking forward to it!"

While departing triumphantly, the thing in Karina's mind was probably not Satou but the dinner dishes.

It seems love affair still hasn't become her priority yet.



"Monsters! It's a dead-end here so I inform!"

"As expected of Nana ane-san!"

"Wrong so I deny. Refer to me as Golden Knight White so I recommend."

Golden Knight White is holding back the overflowing monsters of Selbira Labyrinth by herself.

By all means, she's not Nana of Team Pendragon.

"Eh, but, that way of talking is Nana nee-san's 'rite?"

The muttering explorer was elbowed by his friend on the side.

"Idiot. Read the mood! --Go for it! Golden Knight White."

"Ain't that right-- yer' awesome! Golden Knight White."

It appears the explorers here have come to a tacit understanding.

And then, the explorers began to attack the stopped monsters like a surging wave.

And, on top of a spire of the western guild--.

"Mia-sama! Large monsters have crossed over the mountain from the Blue Territory."

"Mwu, Golden Knight Green."

"Pardon me, Mia-sama. No, Golden Knight Green-sama."

Boys of various fairykins gave their report while pointing at the southern mountain to the small Golden Knight Green who has confirmed another monster invasion besides the labyrinth's one.

"This is bad. Nagas and Colored Moles are coming from the northern mountain too!"

"Mwu, perplexity."

North and south.

The fairykin boys are looking pale at the prospect of a pincer attack by monsters.

"Nn, decided--"

Since her colleague is fully displaying her defensive capabilities below, Golden Knight Green activates a facility to assist the spirit creation while thinking that being found out poses no problem.

--Activate, 『Fairy Hill』"

With Golden Knight Green at the center, rainbow colored Spirit Light is released.

It's the same Spirit Light her beloved emits.

"Spirit Enchantment. ■■■■■...."

Golden Knight Green begins to chant while smiling satisfyingly.
It's the secret art of Spirit Magic--Spirit Creation spell whose use is restricted only for High Elves.

People who have Spirit Seer skill might shed tears if they saw the unfolding scene.

The spire was colored by such beautiful dances of Spirit Light and Spirits.

".... ■ ■ Magic Dragon King Creation <<Create Tiamat>>"

Tiamat that looks as if it's composed of light flies in the sky.

"Annihilate the monsters."

By Golden Knight Green's order, Tiamat who's circling in the sky shoots out two breaths, annihilating the monsters at each ridges of the mountains afar.

From the excessive ridiculous power, cold sweat stream down on the cheeks of the girl under the helmet.

"Overkill?"

Golden Knight Green decides not to use it on the ground and hurriedly deport Tiamat back.

The battles on the ground still continue on, but Golden Knight Green who has judged that there is no turn for her begins to play a tune that rouses fighting spirit after drinking a honey-flavored magic recovery potion.

Encouraged by the heroic music, the explorers and the labyrinth army are determined to fight the monsters.



"It's really peaceful."

"Y-yes-s, Lulu-sama."

"It really is, isn't it."

Golden Knight Black, Lulu Watari is looking at the peaceful town and the revived labyrinth below.

For some reason, the brownies accompanying her are behaving strangely.

"E-Echigoya Firm has confirmed that there's no sign of monster appearing from the labyrinth."

"The monsters there are drying up in the first place, it might be better for us to be vigilant of the monster domains instead of the revived labyrinth."

The brownies who came with her on an airship disclosed the newly acquired information beside Lulu.

"Monsters-san aren't coming are they."

Silence rules the place for a while.

I wonder what's wrong, Lulu cutely tilts her head.

After looking at each others, one of the brownie begins to talk after readying itself.

"No no no, that's cause Lulu-sama shot them all down even before they came into view!"

Since awhile ago, Lulu has been tepidly sniping down every wyverns and serpents who showed themselves from behind the mountain with her Accelerated Gun.

She did it so naturally one might have misunderstood, but frankly

speaking, it's pretty much a superhuman feat.

The pace is so high even the 20 gargoyles working to gather the dropped materials can't keep up with it.

Lulu contemplated for a while, but unable to quite comprehend the issue, she repeats the same words from earlier.

"It's really peaceful."

"Yes, you're absolutely right."

It must be can't be helped for the brownies' tones to sound slightly stiff.



"Invitation to a tea party?"

"Yes, there is not much time until the time your highness has promised Meltina-sama and Bontenyu-sama."

When Princess Shistina came to her private room in Shiga Kingdom's Capital from the Solitary Island Palace, a court lady who looked relieved caught her.

Princess Shistina pondered for a bit, and then she remembered that she had accepted an invitation to a tea party from her sister of different mother and the second queen.

Usually Princess Shistina would have declined such an invitation, she was confounded why she accepted this one, but then she remembered that they asked her to appraise a rare magic book as a pretext so she couldn't refuse it.

The court lady asked her if she wished to change, she said I'm fine like this

and then walked to the salon where the tea party was held.
Court ladies and maids hurriedly chased after princess Shistina.

"Shistina-sama, Sir Pendragon has not returned yet?"

"Yes, unfortunately, Satou won't come back until after he visited the countries along the course."

Princess Shistina replied with an answer she had prepared at the expected question.

"It's really an unusual magic book isn't it? I wonder if this is ancient language?"

"Yes, that appears to be the case. Perhaps the knowledgeable Sir Pendragon could read it?"

Princess Shistina gave an evasive answer, "Well, I wonder about that? I won't know before showing this to him", even while thinking, "Satou who can even read language from the Age of Gods must be able to read this." Even if she can't read it, she memorizes the characters on the title and decides to check it later.

"Slaying a demon lord is an achievement ranking next to Ancestor King Yamato-sama."

"Yes, it's a great deed done without God Parion's blessing and talisman like Hero Hayato-sama's followers. "

"Shistina-sama has really make a wonderful gentleman hers."

The girls who sneered at her behind her back when they heard her getting engaged to Sir Pendragon, "She's getting late married to some upstart viscount", completely ignored their own shortcoming and looked at Princess Shistina enviously.

"Was that dress given by Sir Pendragon too?"

"It's so wonderful, it looks like Jade Silk, but it's even more supple and--has

more mystical luster to it."

"It's like.... the Fairy Silk in the fairy tale."

Princess Shistina's dress is a rare article made from Fairy Silk that only appears in fairy tales, it's the meticulous work of the forest fairy, elves and the house fairy, brownies.

No matter how great an authority one holds, it's something that cannot be obtained unless one prepares to part with wealth enough to buy a country.

Just when the envious stares of the queen and the princess became unpleasant, a retainer came with a bad news informing the arrival of a crowd of monsters on the mountain.

She was going to use this chance to escape the tea party, but unfortunately, her turn never came.

Her golem army didn't even need to fight the monsters, Liza and Tama who got the information from Echigoya Firm--Golden Knight Orange and Golden Knight Pink destroyed them instead.

The traces of destruction at the actual site didn't look like they were made by people, and with many pools of blood left at it.

Mysteriously, not even one body of the monsters remained.

Princess Shistina who got the information from her reconnaissance Drone Golems thought, now that we got the meat, we're having meat dishes at dinner tonight.



"Sera, are you feeling unwell?"

"Head Miko--No, Lily-sama. It's nothing."

The two are facing each other in the Sanctuary of Tenion Temple in Duchy Capital.

Being inside the tranquil sanctuary is enough to heal your heart.

However, according to the story she heard from her beloved, there's a high chance to establish a conversation with God Tenion here.

She can't talk carelessly here.

"What do Gods expect from people?"

Thus, she spun words with a safe content.

『Gods expect for people's devoted prayers and gratitudes for their happy life--however, they have even forgotten to do such trivial things.』

"Lily-sama--"

Sera was going to call Lily who suddenly spoke, but then she immediately perceived that it was the words of God Tenion through Lily and stopped herself.

『And then, they seek greater prosperity each days, be envious of others, and finally become a slave of their desire.』

Sensing sublime divinity from Lily, Sera's thought is filled with awe changing to revere, she couldn't even blink.

『Why are the taboo taboo. Why do Gods who love people conduct such a merciless act. My dear Miko, gentle girl, ask your own heart, seek the answer.』

Before long the divinity that had filled the sanctuary lapses, and she can finally regain control of her unmovable paralyzed-like body.

"Tenion-sama--"

While hugging the unconscious Lily, Sera held deep gratitude at the God who had personally given her troubled self a pointer.

15-34. Golden Knights' Deployment (2), Seryuu City's Boy Knight

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※ Not from Satou's point of view this time

"What's wrong Yuni?"

"Martha-san, would Seryuu city be alright?"

"Priest-sama said the bad ones are the weaselkin right? Nothing to do with us."

The maid little girl and the inn lady's daughter are having such conversations at the Gate Inn of Seryuu City.

Even the people who gathered at the temples to seek salvation right after the God's Divine Messages have returned to their daily life.
Outwardly at least--.



"Get out of Seryuu City demi-humans!"

"Go away!"

An act of barbarism that would make any sensible person frowns is being carried out in one of the vacant lands inside the city.

Brats dressed in good clothes are throwing stones at demi-human children.

Many stones missed their target, but several of the ones thrown by older boys hit theirs.

"P-pleass, sthop"

"I'm sohryy"

"Plese"

Neither the fast dogkin, the agile catkin, nor the smart weaselkin could defy the [Don't move from there] order of their master, asking for mercy was all they could do.

It's an ugly scene that would make decent human beings feel sick, but it appears to be a pleasant entertainment for the humans here.

Of course, not all the people in Seryuu City regards this is an entertainment.

"What are you doing! Cease at once!"

A beautiful girl showed herself up from a carriage parked at the side of the road.

With her long blond hair, her strong-willed blue eyes filled with dignity of a noble are glaring at the people participating in the ugly festival in the park.

"The woman over there, are you a government official? Earl Seryuu should have given a direction not to abuse beast people pointlessly."

The earl has prohibited owners of beastkin slaves inside the city from abusing them because he has a dealing with the influential Viscount Pendragon who has beastkin slaves.

It seems the fact that Viscount Pendragon's cooperation is crucial in order to put the management of Seryuu City's labyrinth on track is not divulged to the low class government officials.

"This is a filthy place. It's not a place some great priestess-sama should come."

For the female official who's aware of her declining beauty, a fresh young girl accompanied by a handsome knight is an object of envy.

Due to her uncontrollable envy, the female government official spout out words to drive the girl away.

"Do you mean to say that you don't intend to obey Earl Seryuu's decree?"

"Did you hear otherwise?"

The girl raised her brows in anger at that answer.

Because that was equivalent to rebelling against the lord.

It'd be a different story if she were one of the ignorant populace, but it's absolutely intolerable for someone who gets their payroll from the lord.

"Sir Marientail, cut down this official. I have confirmed that she's clearly rebelling against the earl."

The girl gave a merciless order to her accompanying boy knight.

A slight anguish floated on the boy knight's face that looks similar to his big sister's, Zena Marientail.

"Auna-sama, are you sure about this?"

"It doesn't matter. A fool who can't abide her lord cannot be anything but harm."

A cold smile shows up on the beautiful girl's face, she mutters, "This is my mercy."

It seems there is no one here who's aware that Auna is the name of Earl Seryuu's daughter.

"Besides, if we arrest her here, her whole family will be executed."

The boy who knows the depth of the girl's compassion and her inflexible nobility draws his sword.

Pale blue light twinkles on the sword's surface.

"Be at ease, it will be painless. Are the people over there your friends? I've to execute them along with you if they are?"

"N-no, I'm not."

"Me neither."

"M-me too, I'm not."

The boy knight let the scurrying men in the vacant lot go, but he acted when the boys who were throwing stones tried to do the same.

"Whoops there, I can't let you kids go just like that."

The boy knight goes around and cut in in front of the children using Flickering Movement and then he drops his fist on them.

The person himself intended it to be a light punishment, but due to his tempered body from the level ups in short term, his version of [light] didn't seem to be light at all.

The kids are groaning in agony on top of the grass in the vacant land.

The boy knight looked a bit awkward at first, but then he turned serious when his ears caught the shrill noise from the [Bone Conduction Alarm].

"Auna-sama!"

"Looks like it has begun."

"Yes."

Auna understood that an unprecedented crisis has befallen Seryuu City from the short exchange with the boy.

"It cannot be helped. We will have to end our tryst."

"T-tryst?"

The boy knight's face reddened at Auna's joke.

It's an innocent scene between a boy and a girl, but it appears the Gods of this world aren't kind enough to allow that.

Black particles extending to the sky can be seen at the direction of the labyrinth.

"It seems the labyrinth monsters are overflowing outside. Go Knight Marientail. As for me, I will accomplish the role that's been assigned to me."

"Yes, Auna-sama!"

The boy runs through alleys with speed of wind.

Was there anyone who noticed that he looked like her big sister during the initial appearance of the labyrinth?

"I wish to City Core. With my Authority as the nobility of Seryuu, cancel the contracts of these people."

『Confirmed the qualification as the nobility of Seryuu to cancel the contract.』

When Auna spoke to the ring she took from her chest, a voice could be heard out of nowhere.

『Canceling the contracts.』

At the same time of that voice, blue light flows from Auna's ring and wraps the beastkin children.

"Your healing will be at Parion Temple. Get into the carriage."

"Buf, canf move"

"Ordee, been"

"I've already released your slave contracts. We don't have much time, quickly move."

The beastkin inadvertently obeyed Auna who was used to giving command, and then they raised shouts of joy when they found out the pain didn't come even though they moved.

At the vacant lot left by the carriage and the beastkin children, the female official who narrowly escaped death timidly lifts her head.

"She totally forgot about me.... Good grief, just who does she think--"

The female official couldn't finish her cursing.

The last thing reflected on her sinking dark eyes were a gigantic camel cricket and a brutal claw that looked like the grim reaper's scythe stuck on her chest.



"Are you guys alright!"

"Marientail-sama! The labyrinth blockade has failed."

A soldier of the territorial army with wounds all over his body answered the boy knight.

"At first the blockade was working...."

A part of the territorial army composed of nobles who thought the monsters coming out of the labyrinth looked weak undid a part of the blockade as they tried to score meritorious deed for themselves.

"What happened to those guys."

"Their bones are over there."

One soldier laughed with a gloomy face.

"Marientail-sama! I'm sorry for being late. We will help the blockade here. Marientail-sama, please exterminate the monsters who have scattered in the city!"

"Understood. I'll leave here to you."

The branch manager of Echigoya Firm appeared with a group of golems and was left to take care of the labyrinth's blockade.

"Platoon commander Allison, I will entrust the command here to you. Leave the direct battles to the golems, please don't let any monster that crosses the blockade alive."

"Where are you going company commander?"

"I'm going to dispose of the monsters scattered in the city."

Those sounded like he was abandoning his duty as a commander, but there was a reason for that.

The boy knight's level is higher than anyone here, but his actual battle experience is shorter than anyone here.

Thus he decided to secede the command to the experienced platoon commander Allison, and went to do a sweeping outside.

"Platoon Marientail will be divided into four groups. I give the right to command the groups to the noncommissioned officers. Hunt every monster you see while waiting for the reinforcement from territorial army to arrive."

""Yes, commander!""

The four military units went on to slaughter the monsters that attacked the citizens.

Among them--.

"Amazing, he defeated a monster that could even defend against great axe in one blow!"

"Uwaah, look at that! He defeated another one."

"Awesome, didn't know there was a knight that strong besides Kigori-sama."

"Oh! How nimble! He kicked the wall to get to the roof!"

The citizens who saw the boy knight's deeds shouted as if they were watching an action movie before their eyes.

"But y'know, the sword of that knight-sama earlier--"

"You saw it too?"

"It really was shining blue wasn't it?"

Such conversations continue to repeat and spread inside the city, the notion that, "Boy Knight Marentail's true identity is the 『Silver Masked Hero』" seemed as if it was true by the time the monster number had decreased.

And then they lived happily ever after--.



--Would have been nice if it ended like that.

"The holy sword would cry y'know? I advise." <TLN: It refers to itself using Wagahai (I).>

The boy knight is facing off against a jet black demon in the open space in front of the castle.

Moreover, two camel crickets bigger than houses are accompanying the demon on its sides.

"One who attacked Seryuu City before--Jet Black Greater Demon."

"Pleasantly correct. I delighted." <TLN: The line is just as awkward in Japanese. That's just how the demon talks.>

The greater demon draws a dark red great sword out of thin air.

"Now let's fight. I battle."

At the northern end of Shiga Kingdom, the boy knight's battle against despair has just begun.

15-35. Golden Knights' Deployment (3), Little Hero

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※ Not from Satou's perspective

"『Physical Reinforcement』, 『Herculean Strength』, 『Agility』,
『Concentration』"

Boy Knight Marientail buffed himself using his Skills.

The boy knight was being wary of the greater demon as they faced against each other, but the demon only looked at the boy knight gleefully, as if it had no intention to attack at all.

"I don't know what you're planning, but you'll regret that carelessness!"
『Are you ready now? I boredom.』

The boy knight used Flickering Movement and changed his course perpendicularly when he got close to the greater demon.

However, the greater demon is unaffected by the feint, it keeps its gaze at the boy knight.

The boy knight who had gotten right beside the greater demon recited the Command Word [Quick Increase], the holy sword in his hand shined and the boy's running speed increased fivefold.

The greater demon slightly smiled at the boy's actions.

For a greater demon, this much speed is as good as standing still.
The corner of the greater demon's mouth disgustingly lifted at the imagination of the boy's last moment.

"Acceleration Formation."

A light ring appeared in front of the boy knight, and then he explosively accelerated when he passed through it.

It was such a speed that made even the greater demon's kinetic vision lost him.

Moreover, the boy knight was not aiming to attack with a powerful large slash, but a stabbing technique that made use of his speed to its fullest.

But yet--.

『A simple acceleration equaling constant speed? I ridicule.』

--The boy knight which attacked at a speed that even made his outline looked blurred was intercepted by the greater demon's mere instinct.

The boy knight was blown away by its jet black tail, bouncing while breaking the stone pavements and crashed into the bookshelves of a bookstore, stopped moving.

The boy knight is hidden by the broken bookshelves and piles of old books.

『Now, entertain me more, I expect.』

Normally, one wouldn't have lived through a counterattack of a greater demon.

Even if they did, they'd probably be critically injured.

Even though that's the common sense, the greater demon's line of sight is unshakably fixed at the bookstore where the boy knight disappeared into.

Sure enough--a blue light jumped out of the white dust.

"WOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

Responding to the boy knight's war cry, the holy sword he holds shines blue.

The greater demon doesn't counter the second attack and blocks him with its dark red great sword, the clash scatters blue and red sparks around.

『Lonesome struggle, I pity.』

Looking down at the boy knight who's wielding the holy sword with both his hand, the greater demon's free hand swings down.

Its poisonous claws are wet with abominable radiance.

"--He ain't alone!"

A good looking man who ran past the open space with Flickering Movement slashes the greater demon with trailing red light of Magic Edge.

The greater demon's tail counter attacks were all handled skilfully by the blond haired good looking man.

"Kigori-sama!"

"Yo, Marientail. Kept ya waiting!"

The one who has appeared as the boy knight's reinforcement is the strongest level 40 knight, pride of Seryuu City.

And--.

A huge lightning attacks the greater demon.

"Hehe, thanks to you buying time, Lightning Geezer got to launch a serious blow."

"This is Rindolf-sama's Ruin Thunder."

The thunderbolt cast by the chief magician Rindolf-shi known as

Lightning Geezer made the greater demon stopped moving.

『Numbing surprise, I delighted.』

When the greater demon threw out its chest, its burnt skin scattered, and flawless skin appeared.

Even a surprise attack with advanced lightning magic is not effective against a greater demon.

『Quickly returning the favor, I swift attack.』

Jet black lightning released from the greater demon's horn extends toward Lightning Geezer who's on top of the castle's spire.

However, a wall of light that appears before the castle blocks the magic.

--It's a defensive wall created by the City Core.

The greater demon gleefully looks at the wall of light without minding about its attack getting blocked.

There are soldiers with magic cannons and fully equipped knights beyond the wall of light.

『Amusing toys, I call.』

The greater demon roared once and then a jet black circle was produced below it.

"That looks bad, let's stop him Sir Marientail."

"Yes!"

The two assaulted the greater demon while leaving blue and red trails of light.



"D-damn! It can also use its scales along with tail!"

"Marietail! Evade them!"

The scales on the greater demon's body transform, attacking the boy knight's abdomen.

The blond man cut in there.

"Kigori-sama!"

"I can block this much with Vajra Body. Don't stop your hand, stop him no matter what it takes!"

The scales gouge the good looking man's armor and body, he's coughing blood from his mouth.

"Yes!"

The boy knight's effort at swinging holy swords while enduring his tears, and the desperate backing from the castle turn fruitless before long.

『Now, succumb to despair. I recommend.』

Various grotesque demons appeared from below the greater demon.

Countless lesser demons and insect rider mid demons riding insect monsters are arising from the magic circle that has expanded in the open space.

Lesser demons with wings fly in the sky and play around by crashing down on houses.

"It's like the gate to hell's opened."

While spilling blood from his lips, the good looking man's dark eyes are looking at the surroundings.

As a top level person in the territorial army, he understands that there is no force in Seryuu Earldom that can oppose this large of an army.

"W-we can't give up yet! Even if it's for a blink or an instant. We have to buy a bit of time!"

The boy knight encourages the good looking man.

The demons are looking at the scene while smirking and laughing as if it's an interesting show.

"--After that what then. Reinforcement from the royal family won't come. Even if they did, everything woulda been destroyed already."

"Wake up Kigori!"

A hot unyielding fist shakes the resigning good looking man up.

"It's not the kingdom's--Kuro-dono will come. Ane-sama will definitely make him move."

A small bit of hope burns inside the good-looking man's heart with those words.

"Kuro--the hero's follower eh."

And then, the round two of the despairing act between demons and knights began.



"Martha-san, I wonder if the children at the orphanage are safe."

"It's alright, that place is as sturdy as a castle, knight Son-sama told me."

In a corner of the shelter under the inn, the maid little girl, Yuni and the daughter of the innlady, Martha are diverting their anxiety with little voices.

The neighboring people including the inn's guests are taking shelter here.

An especially loud thunderous sound resounds auspiciously.

After that, the outside becomes quiet.

"Maybe they've repelled the monsters?"

"Let's see for a bit."

"Oy! Stop!"

"I'm just gonna take a peek."

One of the evacuated men shakes off the people who try to stop him, he opens the basement door and peeks outside.

"Oy, how is it outside?"

The man who tried to stop him seemed to be worried about outside too, he asked the man who stopped talking.

However, the man kept silent and then something fell down from above.

"Ouch. What's this? It's sticky--UWAAAAAAAAA"

When the man realized that the thing he held in hands was the head of the man who peeked outside, he screamed and threw it away.

The corpse of the man who lost his head fell down while spraying blood.

An even more menace comes to the basement that was dominated by scream and bellow.

With crunching sounds, the ceiling--the inn's floor is torn off, sunlight pour in.

Inside that light, somethings peek in, two black rods--no, they're the feelers of a huge insect.

The instant the feeler touched one of the men, the eye of a huge camel cricket appears in the torn ceiling and perceives everyone.

The feeler coils around Yuni and Martha who were in the corner of the room.

"GYAAAAAAAA, help me father, mother, help help help help."

"H-help--Satou-san."

Martha and Yuni screamed, but only the inn couple dared to challenge the feeler.

Their desperate resistances end with them falling victims to another feeler.

"Let go of Yuni, nanodesu!"

A ball of light shining blue flying from afar pierces through the two feelers.

And then a white shadow that comes after the light ball catches the four people who were released from the feelers in the air.

"Lyuryu! Take care of Yuni and the others nodesu."

--LYURYURYUUU.

A small knight clad in golden armor jumped off the white dragon.

"Sure Kill Magic Edge (Vorpala)--"

In the middle of speaking the technique's name, the golden knight attacks

the camel cricket's black body.

The camel cricket's defensive wall that was shining dark red was broken in an instant, the body that was harder than steel was pierced through like it was made of paper.

"Punishment, nanodesu!"

The golden knight's sword that burst out in the sky is emitting blue light.

"H-hero-sama?"

"It's a little hero-sama."

The people who came out of the inn spoke that unanimously when they saw the golden knight.

--LYURYURYUUU.

The white dragon circling in the sky informed that there were new enemies closing in.

"Lyuryu! Drop off Yuni and the others below nodesu."

--LYURYURYUUU.

As instructed by the golden knight, the white dragon that's holding the inn family and the maid in its hand drop them down.

It was a soft gentle descent.

"Are you not injured nanodesu?"

"Y-yes, thank you--nanodesu? B-by any chance."

Yuni was going to guess correctly, but she stopped as the golden knight made a mouth zipper gesture.

Of course, Yuni didn't know a gesture from Japan's showa era, but she

sensitively interpreted that it was, "Keep it a secret" and stopped talking.

"Hero-sama, please tell us your name."

"Pochi's name is Golden Knight Yellow nanodesu!"

"Golden Knight Yellow-sama! Thank you for saving us!"

Even though Yuni was intensely retorting inside her mind, "You said it! You said it, Pochi-chan!", she endured by smiling wryly in cold sweat. And then, she spread the golden knight's false name, "Golden Knight Yellow" at the surrounding with an especially loud voice.

She's quiet the worrywart little girl.

"Did the others not come?"

"Zena went to the labyrinth nodesu. Pochi will go over there with Lyuryu to defeat the demon nodesuyo."

"So you've come to defeat the demon! Golden Knight Yellow-sama!"

Even while having headache at her friend's verbal slip, she conveyed the golden knight's actions to the surrounding people.

The admirable effort of Yuni who was gasping for breath didn't reach the natural airhead golden knight, it was over with her tilting her head cutely.

"Then, here it goes! Pochi will bring the souvenirs when she comes with Master nodesu!"

Yuni waves back at her friend who left while waving.

"Thank you for your covering, Yuni-chan."

"Eh, Satou--"

She looked at the familiar voice, but the one over there was an unfamiliar face.

However, the gentle pat on Yuni's head is of his from her memories.

"Yes, please stay normally next time."

"Right. We'll definitely do that."

That mysterious person gathered the people, created an underground shelter with earth magic and put up a powerful barrier.

It was such a splendid barrier whose sturdiness could be perceived even by untrained eyes that they could believe him when he guaranteed that even demon lords couldn't break it.



『Is it over? I dissatisfied.』

The holy sword held by the rough breathing boy knight has lost its blue luster, the female magic soldiers he's protecting behind him have also used up all their magic power they can't even move.

The only one that can use magic now is a female wind magician.

The good looking knight Kigori who fought together with him has also left the stage with big injury, Garleon temple head Nebinen is desperately trying to save his life with healing magic behind a destroyed house.

".... ■■■■ Air Hammer"

The wind magic shot by the girl who has prepared to die vanishes without even reaching the greater demon.

『Composition too soft. I grading.』

The greater demon is looking down at the despairing girl, who puts both her hands on the ground, with eyes filled with joy.

People's despair and fear are a feast for demons like them.

In order to enjoy that, they continuously torment their opponents while leaving them alive.

".... ■■ Air Hammer"

A silver knight appearing in the sky casted a chant-shortened accelerated wind magic.

The magic that should have resulted the same like earlier reached the greater demon, showing enough power to make it step back several steps.

"<<DANCE>> Wind Stiletto!"

Receiving the same Holy Verse as the holy sword of kingdom's defense Claiomh Solais, seven stilettos released from the silver knight's hands are dancing in the sky while letting off clear sounds.

They attack the greater demon like birds of prey while creating blue trails of light.

『Are you a pupil of Ancestor King Yamato? I delighted.』

The greater demon gleefully handles every blades which attack like a skilled swordsman each.

"<<CLAD>> Wind Stiletto!"

『Two Holy Verses? I astonished.』

Holy Verse is one per one.

That's an absolute rule that even applies to the divine gift holy swords.

However, the black haired boy who made the stiletto will laugh it off if he hears that.

That difficulty is only a matter of putting several circuits in parallel.

The invisible vacuum blades spread on the stilettos are gradually cornering the greater demon.

Yet, even so, the differences between humans and demons are obvious. Even though the holy swords dancing in the sky keep making many wounds, the decisive blow is still far away.

The silver knight begins to chant an attack magic to recover from the hopeless situation.

『Kukakakaka, suffer by the poison in the black blood. I pleased.』

The soldiers who inhaled the scattered blood of the greater demon are lying on the stone pavement while coughing blood.

Seeing that, the silver knight bites her lips under the helmet. She holds down her feeling to save her coworkers by using ranged healing wind magic with her willpower.

The thing that she should do now is to repulse the greater demon.

And then she completed the spell up to right before the verse for the invocation.

The silver knight makes her next move before before chanting the last invoking verse.

"<<APPEASE>> Wind Stiletto!"

Receiving the third Holy Verse, the seven stilettos shined brightly--they burst open from inside and turned into blue particles.

『It couldn't endure it? I ridicule.』

"Tempest"

Without minding the ridiculing greater demon, the silver knight recited the last invoking verse of the advanced wind magic that she had reserved.

Tempest-like wind rages with the greater demon in the center, golden trails of light appearing inside the wind shuts the greater demon inside the tempest like a cage.

Even the continuous attacks of its jet black arms from the inside only warped the golden cage, failing to break it.

It's a magic made by engrafting the secret technique of spirit magic Garuda into wind magic, a magic especially made for her.

『Kuhahaha! I pleased.』

The vacuum blades appearing inside the golden cage inside the tempest excruciate the greater demon.

Even with that much attacks, humans' magic isn't enough to defeat a greater demon. Normally that is--.

Twinkling blue sparkles can be seen inside the tempest.

The tempest changes before long, evolving into a different magic glistening with blue sparkles.

『You sacrificed a divine gift holy sword to defeat me! I commend.』

The greater demon shaved by the holy swords' grains disappeared into mist inside the tempest.

"It's thanks to magic and tools Satou-san gave me."

The silver knight mutters at the tempest without anyone to hear her.

A golden knight riding on a silver lesser dragon arrived beside her.

"Zena--not, nodesu. Err, err."

"It's Silver Knight Air remember. Golden Knight Yellow-san."

"That's right nodesu! Pochi wanted to say that nodesuyo!"

The silver knight hit her forehead with her hand, having the same feeling as Yuni earlier, but she quickly pulled herself together and heal the surrounding people with advanced wind magic.

"Pochi and Lyuryu defeated all the other demon people nodesu."

"As expected."

She said it lightly, but there aren't many people in the vast Shiga Kingdom that can defeat multiple flying mid demons in a short amount of time.

"Demon lord hasn't appeared yet nodesu?"

The golden knight made a dangerous remark while cutely tilting her head.

"Yes, it should be over with this."

If they appear that easily, people probably won't be able to live a peaceful life.

The two who have finished emergency measures by using magic descend to the ground.

"You've worked hard. Yukel."

"Ne, Ane-sama?"

"I'm a follower of Hero Nanashi, Silver Knight Air. I'm not your elder sister. Understand?"

"Yes! Ane--no, Air-dono."

The golden knight's ear twitches as she gazes at the conversation between siblings.

"--Someone is calling nodesu."

"Yellow?"

"Pochi will be going for a bit nodesu."

The golden knight rides on the white dragon and flies in the sky.

And she went to a backyard of a temple in Seryuu City.



『Here you are--little hero.』

A little girl with honey colored hair is knitting corolla in the middle of a flower garden in the backyard.

The little girl smiles unsuitably of her age.

"Pochi is Golden Knight Yellow nanodesu. Hero is Master nanodesuyo?"

『No, you're a [True Hero]. Everyone just keeps it a secret.』

"Really nanodesu?"

The honest golden knight who doesn't understand doubt looks as if she comprehends the little girl while tilting her head.

『Yes, really nanodesu. That's why, I want you as hero to defeat the demon lord.』

"Bad demon lord nanodesu? Master told Pochi not to defeat good demon lords nodesu?"

The battle inside the underground labyrinth with her master floated in the golden knight's mind.

『It's a really bad weasel demon lord, so it's alright. Master will praise you if you defeat it.』

"Then Pochi will do her best nodesu! Pochi will call Zena now nodesu."

『No, you won't make it in time then. My hero is almost getting killed by the bad demon lord over there.』

"That's bad nanodesu."

After saying that, the golden knight stands on her Dragon Steed's, the little girl smiles satisfyingly.

A smile that would have made the golden knight's friends to prepare for battle against the little girl had they were here.

『You're going right away right?』

"Yes, nanodesu."

However, the pure golden knight who doesn't understand to doubt readily consents the little girl's request.

『I'll open the gate to the battlefield.』

A gate that looks similar to the temple's gate is opened before the golden knight and the white dragon.

A huge ruin dyed in white can be seen beyond the torn space.

『Go little hero. And save my hero.』

"Yes nanodesu! Pochi will work hard nodesuyo!"

The golden knight replied cheerfully and turned toward the battlefield together with the white dragon.

15-36. Divine Punishment (5), The Forbidden Knights

*

※ Not in Satou's point of view

"A giant of light--so the God has manifested itself!"

When I turned toward the captain, I saw a yellow giant near the place where apostles and demon lords were fighting.

"Liedill, evade it!"

At the vice captain's shout, I leap forward without checking the surrounding and wrap myself in the mantle created from the rat demon lord's pelt.

"GUWAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA"

I could hear the scream of a colleague behind me.

The city in front of me is bathed in yellow light, turning into white salt.

"T-the Magic Eater Birds!"

I heard Dazlim the tigerkin knight screaming.

The flying [Magic Eater Birds] are falling apart while leaving trails of white salt.

"Divine punishment of the Gods huh...."

"That kind of cursed god, just call it evil god."

I've never been able to get along with vice-captain who always butted head with me at every occasion, but I agree with him this time.

Crisis Perception that didn't act until a while ago is ringing an alarming warning.

--What's that shining thing?"

From between the light peeking through the clouds, countless shining objects showed themselves up.

Although the outlines are vague, they look like cubes.

"Familiars of the evil god are they!"

They must have appeared to help the evil god.

"They're comin' here too!"

"It appears they've deemed us as God's enemies--All members of 『Temple Knights』, let's show them evil god our real strength."

""OU!""

Responding to the captain's order, everyone goes to challenge the cubes.

"Magic swords ain't working on them eh?"

"My great holy sword Monofoshi Zao ain't doing good either."

Just as my friends have said, my cherished sword feels like it's cutting water.

These cubes seem to be a kind of apostle too.

"All members, I allow the use of the white sword for fighting apostles!"

The white swords coated in dragon fang powder is restricted in their use. The captain was preserving it until the fight against evil god, but he probably judged that it would have no point if we died fighting the cubes before that.

"It's working! It's working!"

"Of course! They're the secret plan of His Majesty the Emperor and Tactician-dono."

As long as we have the weapons, defeating the cubes that are only fast but bad at cooperating is easy.

We defeated the cubes one after another.

Our only concern is the remaining coating of the white swords--.



"Liedill! Come!"

Lion knight Gizlem called me.

"Sir Gizlem?"

"The captain has ordered for some Temple Knights to gather."

"But we can't leave this place...."

"Shut it! This is an order! Leave those cubes to Vice Captain Gwalba."

Lion knight Gizlem caught my arm and dragged me to the gathering place.

--The Imperial Palace?

I was taken to the palace in the center of the whitened imperial capital.

There are 13 Temple Knights including me in front of the palace gate.

"Captain! At this situation--."

Just when the bespectacled rat knight Mobitt was going to flare up at the captain, right at that time.

--Wha."

A huge purple beast broke through the palace and showed itself up. It looks like a grotesque-looking wild weasel beast.
The beast turned its eyes at us.

--Scary.

A terror enough to make me want to run away from this place immediately grasps my heart.

"D-demon lord...."

When I muttered that, the other knights besides the captain drew their swords.
A lot of the swords have already lost their white luster.

"Restrain yourselves! You are before His Majesty's presence!"

I can't digest the captain's words.

--Do you not understand?"

"Tactician--dono?"

A reincarnated person who looked similar to Tactician-dono showed himself up from the palace.
That smooth bald Tactician-dono shouldn't be able to grow such long purple hair.

"That is His Majesty. He has casted away his weaselkin body in order to challenge the God."

There are certainly light of wisdom in its grotesque eyes.

"Hear me! You have the tenacity not to lose yourself in battles."

Urged by Tactician-dono, the captain straightened his posture and shouted out.

"Therefore, we grant you these."

There are several twisted dark purple horns that give off dull light on a floating plate beside the captain.

"T-this is?"

"Entrusted by His Majesty, the ancient artifacts--Twisted Demon Horns."

I can feel terrible miasma and curse from the Twisted Demon Horn.

"If you use the Twisted Demon Horn, you can fight against the God and obtain a power that exceeds even a hero."

Hearing that, my colleagues show a daring smile and gather in front of the twisted horns.

"However!"

The captain continued his words as if stopping my colleagues whose hands were reaching toward the Twisted Demonic Horns.

"However, it requires a great compensation."

The captain looks up at His Majesty who has turned into a beast.

『Noble knights who seek freedom.』

A voice tingled with mysterious reverberations are echoing in front of the palace.

『For the freedom of people.』

It's unmistakably the voice of our respected Majesty.

『To liberate mankind from its rulers.』

His words are filled with determination and sorrow.

『I expect you to abandon everything as a man.』

After saying that, His Majesty turns toward the yellow giant.

"We will not force you."

The captain said that and took a nearby twisted horn without hesitation. Seeing that, my friends also scrambled for one.

The last remaining Twisted Demonic Horn.

Pressured by everyone's stare, I took the last one.

After ascertaining that, the captain pushes the Twisted Demonic Horn onto his forehead.

"For our desire for freedom!"

After shouting that, the captain's white fur undulate, changing into a grotesque with bubbling sounds.

Even after seeing such a terrifying transformation, my friends only drew their breath and pushed the Twisted Demonic Horn onto their foreheads.

""For our desire for freedom!""

My friends are turning into grotesques.

They lost their figures as people, losing even their sense, my friends roared like a beast.

Crunching and clanking sounds that are unthinkable coming from people reach my ears.

Repulsed by the excessive dread, it seemed I had dropped the Twisted Demonic Horn.

I reach my hand at the horn in a hurry.

However, a hand covered in white fur appearing from behind me picked up the Twisted Demonic Horn.

"Vice Captain!"

The owner of the white hand was the vice captain Gwalba.

"This is mine. It's too early for you--"

Gwalba's mouth forms a crescent shape and then he shouts, "For our desire for freedom!" out loud.

I had a feeling that Gwalba who had changed into a grotesque muttered faintly, "--You just stay there."

"Go! Greater demons! Army of liberty who serve under Demon God!"

Tactician shouted at my friends who had changed into grotesques.

"Now is the time to break the chains and shackles called blessing of the foolish Gods!"

The laughing Tactician looked like a devil who entices people into

depravity.



『My good luck to them!』

With His Majesty's blessing, light purple light rain down on my grotesque friends who have gathered around His Majesty.

His Majesty turns his face at me.

『Liedill, my knight. Make sure to watch the last battle of our empire until the end, and bequeath it to the future generations.』

--Your Majesty?"

His Majesty's line of sight moves to the Tactician.

『Tactician. My gratitude for all your work so far. Return to your master.』

His Majesty and Tactician are staring at each other.

--Your master?

His Majesty's words are as if--.

"Is that so, then I will hand over the last firework (romance) to her."

After showing a priest staff with red protuberance to His Majesty, Tactician presented it to me.

The thing I spontaneously received should be the magic device for [Self-Destruct] that His Majesty spoke of before.

I reflexively accepted it but as I have to protect His Majesty's life, there is no way I activate this self-destruct device.

"Farewell, Tarou. Building the empire with you was truly fun. I will await for good news in a faraway land."

Tactician who had said his farewell was turning vague like a haze and then he disappeared like he was dissolved in the air.

Being at a loss, I can only look at the self-destruct magic device in my hand.

『March on, my loyal knights! We will kill Zaikuon!』

His Majesty led my grotesque friends toward the battlefield.

I watch over their fight from the white imperial palace that has no one remaining.

The beautiful imperial capital gets destroyed by the storm raged from the battles, disappearing into white sandstorm.

The empire with all its dream, hope and glory disappeared like a short-lived dream.

Even after turning into grotesque beasts, even after devoting their loyalty to His Majesty my friends are disappearing into white mist every time they touch the yellow giant.

Alone, by myself again.

"Aah, please don't leave me...."

There is no way anyone hears that mutter, the yellow giant is walking step by step toward the palace.

It's as if there's something that the yellow giant seeks in this palace--.

※ Next, "15-37. Divine Punishment (6), Hero VS" is scheduled for 12/25.

15-37. Divine Punishment (6), Hero Meiko

*

※ This is not from Satou's perspective

"Geez, just when I came to this backwater country to punish the weasels, the God had gone ahead and dropped the divine punishment, what's the meaning of this."

Hero Meiko Kaname is grumbling in the noble outlook room inside the Saga Empire's battleship.

Handsome knights and priests who look like characters of otome games are serving around her.

It was originally a fleet of seven battleships that were going to attack Weasel Empire's capital, but they got the God's oracle along the way and five of the ships had gone back to Saga Empire.

"There is nothing we can do, Gods' will are beyond what us mortals can fathom."

"Hmph. Since we have those phone-like 『Talisman』, they could have sent a mail or something. Geez, they can't even hourensou us even though they've lived so long."

The handsome priests had a cramp on his face hearing the hero's blasphemous remark.

By the way, the hero who was a junior high school student in her original world doesn't know that hourensou is an abbreviation of houkoku (report), renraku (contact) and soudan (consultation). She only somehow knows the nuance.

"I want to ride that spaceship-like silver ship, not this dingy uncomfortable ship."

"We're deeply sorry. Hero-sama's guards are only good at disappointing

and troubling hero-sama."

A handsome official who looks like a puppy apologized to the hero.

The hero's exclusive ship, [Sub-Dimensional Battleship Jules Verne] was attacked by the black greater demon, and got partially destroyed together with its maintenance dock.

"But it's not your fault."

She casually flapped her hand toward the apologizing official, telling him not to mind it.

"I'd rather push this checking the divine punishment execution job to those accompanying aunties."

A longearkin man began to play the hero's favorite tune with his lute in order to pacify the complaining hero's boredom.

No one beside the hero knew that it was the opening of an idol anime for girls.



"Your Highness Maryest, the investigation unit has returned."

In the noble room inside another battleship accompanying the hero's, Imperial Princess Maryest who was Hero Hayato's attendant was receiving report from the captain.

"Regarding the fallen airship that we discovered earlier--"

Princess Maryest creased her forehead as she listened to the captain

carefully.

"I see... So there's no survivor either this time."

"Yes, since the bodies had all turned into salt, we couldn't retrieve their bodies nor their memento."

"I understand. You can withdraw."

"Please excuse me."

Princess Maryest let out a heavy sigh after confirming that the captain had gone.

They had found many wreckages of fallen big airships and cities that had turned into salt on their way along the Weasel Empire's territory.

And, they found no survivor in every one of them.

"Have a drink, Mary."

"Rin."

Ringrande offered a glass with red wine to her depressed-looking friend. Princess Maryest inclined the glass in a disorderly manner without even enjoying the fragrance and drank the bitter red liquid in one gulp.

"You should savor it more, it's a good wine."

"--You're right."

Princess Maryest finally had a smile on her face when Ringrande chided her while smiling wryly.

After a slight recess, they got a report of the fleet arrival at the neighborhood of the Weasel Empire's capital and the two went to the bridge.



"It's white.... It's as if we're still inside the cloud."

Princess Maryest muttered blankly while overlooking the capital that had turned white from the divine punishment.

"Mary! That!"

"Are those demon lords? And so many of them...."

"Something in the center, I don't know what that is, is fighting the demon lords. I wonder if that's the God's apostle?"

"It's like the Armageddon, the last battle between God and Devil, that Hayato mentioned."

A yellow giant is fighting the demon lords clad in purple light.

Princess Maryest and Ringrande are in awe with the yellow giant who puts up a good fight against the demon lords these girls and Hayato desperately fought.

"Your Highness, should we stay on the course?"

"No. If we just charge on ahead as is, we will only lose the hero and the fleet fruitlessly--"

Princess Maryest shook her head at the asking captain.

"--Retreat. It's impossible for us to intervene the fight between God and Demons."

She implicitly says that it's suicidal for humans to plunge into that battle.

"Mary! The flagship the hero rides on!"

Ringrande who was looking outside the window shouted.

"Light signals from Hero-sama's ship! 『Demon lords in sight, we will go on ahead』 it said."

"--That idiot!"

Ringrande cursed hearing the signal officer.

It was an extremely disrespectful act against the hero, but the people in the bridge wisely chose to keep silent.

"Maryest, you and the others retreat! I'll bring back that idiot with a rope on her neck."

"Wait!"

Ringrande who was going to rush out of the bridge looked back at the door.

"Mary, go to Shiga Kingdom! Seek Hero Nanashi and Satou's cooperation!"

After saying that, she passed through the corridor with loud footsteps and jumped out of the emergency hatch riding on a flying wooden horse.

"We could have called that frivolous hero back if only God Parion's talisman had been restored."

That complaint was erased by the wind, reaching no one's ears.



--GRRWLLOMAOOOO!

One of the demon lords roared, invisible sound waves hit God Zaikuon. Even though it was an advanced wind magic, God Zaikuon only staggered, it didn't seem like he was damaged much.

--ZAZZZZZAYEEEE.

On the other hand, the greater demons surrounding the God lost their limbs every time they touched the yellow light wrapping the God. It was very much a one sided battle, but thanks to the protection of the [Good Luck] given to them by the emperor, it was not a fatal wound as their limbs regenerated themselves.

Although, even though the yellow light has that much power, it doesn't seem to be able to encroach the purple light that wraps the demon lords. There are five demon lords including the Great Weasel Demon Lord in this place; a foxkin demon lord with swords as his arms, a snakehead demon lord with octopus-like lower half, a tigerkin demon lord with wings on his back, and a human-shaped demon lord with ox horns.

However, the demon lords are fighting God Zaikuon erratically, there is no coordination between them. Only Sword Demon Lord appears to follow the Great Demon Lord's orders.

--ZAZZZZZAYEEEE.

The God's yellow light twinkles and then countless light arrows appear, attacking the roaring demon lords. The light arrows pierced through the demon lords' purple light, but most of them evaded the succeeding arrows.

--NWOLLWYWEEEEEE!

The Great Weasel Demon Lord roared, then violet light wrapped the other demon lords. He's using [Good Luck] Unique Skill.

In response to that, the demon lords activated their own Unique Skills. With each other Unique Skills, the demon lords that are already strong by themselves become even stronger.

The Great Weasel Demon Lord suddenly looked up.

『How boorish....』

Saga Empire's battleship appeared breaking the cloud over there. Apparently, the Great Weasel Demon Lord still retains his individuality even now.

『Temple Knights, get rid of them. Yet, if they break through them, you go.』
『--ATYOURcommand, At yourCOMmandegozaru.』

Sword Demon Lord nodded at the Great Demon Lord's order. It seems he's losing his self after using too much Unique Skills.



"Why!"

Hero Meiko shouted in anger inside the shaking ship and explosions sounds.

From the shaking that's clearly different from the ones up until now, fear is mixed in Hero Meiko's confident attitude.

"The Magic Furnace at the starboard is blown! Losing propulsion!"

"Intruders on the starboard! It's the Temple Knights of Weasel Empire!"

The bridge crews shouted out the report frantically.

"That means they're defying Saga Empire's hero aren't they."

Hero Meiko smiled ferociously as if shaking off her fear.

"How impertinent for mere weasels."

Hero Meiko slapped her own cheeks and stood up full of fighting spirits. As if matching that timing, the bridge's door was blown up from outside.

Four Temple Knights broke through the smoke, entering the bridge.

"Leave this to us!"

"We have to show our good side to Meiko-sama."

The hero's followers draw their swords and point them at the Temple Knights.

However--their number is the only superiority.

The leading Temple Knight with four arms cut up the followers' holy armor and magic armor like papers with his white sword.

The remaining Temple Knights infringe upon the shaking blood-vomiting followers.

"Geez, how embarrassing. Are you guys only good for your faces?"

While being disappointed at the cowardliness of her struggling retainers, Hero Meiko wraps herself in blue light.

It's the sign of the activation of Hero Meiko's Unique Skills.

The first Unique Skill, [Unrivaed Mobility (Cannot be hit)] can evade every attacks.

"This hero is of evasion type!"

"Fire a barrage with no space for evading!"

It seems there were betrayers in Saga Empire, the Temple Knights seem to be aware of Hero Meiko's Unique Skills.

The temple knights took the magic devices on their waists and fired a rain of fire bullets from the submachine-gun-like fire wands.

Hero Meiko is wrapped in blue holy light once again.

The second Unique Skill, [Foresight], accurately predicts 10 seconds to the future.

"Useless! You can't run anywhere even if you try to predict it!"

One of the Temple Knights shouted triumphantly.

Just as he's planned, it's a solid barrage with no place to escape. There's no space even on the port.

The third Unique Skill [Infinite Arsenal (Inexhaustible Swords)] is activated, a holy sword appears out of thin air.

It closely resembled the holy sword the previous hero Hayato had, Arondight.

The Temple Knights wondered if she intended to cut the barrage with the holy sword.

"Don't make light of heroooooooooooooooo!"

Hero Meiko shouted a spirited yell.

The barrage shot from the fire wands changed its trajectory as if it was changing it on its own.

It must be a miracle from Hero Meiko's Unique Skill, [Unrivaled Mobility

(Cannot be hit)].

"Impossible!"

"Meiko Kaname, that's the name of the one that defeats you."

Wrapped in holy light, Hero Meiko cut the Temple Knight along with his holy sword he used to defend against her in two.

Her last Unique Skill, [Strongest Katana (Nothing cannot be Cut)] cuts everything in existence.

The second and third Temple Knights thrust their magic swords at Hero Meiko, prepared to die together.

"W, what?"

"Impossible...."

The two's magic swords slipped through Meiko's body.

Betraying the Temple Knights who thought that she had changed place with an illusion, the Hero Meiko they hit cut both of them with the holy sword in her hand.

There's not even the slightest hesitation nor mercy at the tip of her sword.

"Hee, you're good."

Hero Meiko muttered in admiration.

After cutting the third one, a person who could block her sword finally appeared.

It's the four-armed Temple Knight who holds the white sword.

Hero Meiko seemed to be satisfied after exchanging blows several times, she struck her holy sword at the white sword.

Blue and white light filled the deck, both swords broke with a clear sound.

"You have no chance of victory now that you've lost your holy sword."

"Aren't you the same, your prided white sword's broken too isn't it."

The Temple Knight picks up the holy sword and magic swords of his cohorts below him.

"It might be not as good as Dragon Fang powder, but absurdity also dwells in this concentrated dragoon blood."

While speaking some cryptic things, he drips red liquid in a bottle on the three swords in his hands.

"Hmmm. Then me too."

A new holy sword appears from the thin air of the Infinite Arsenal.

The holy sword this time resembles the strongest holy sword that Hero Nanashi carries, Excalibur.

"It's such a waste that there's no eject function on this warehouse."

The grumbling hero's holy sword exchanges blows with the three swords. Red and blue light dyed the bridge, broken machinery parts grazed by the light scatter around.

"There should be no level difference."

The temple knight's arms has decreased by one.

"My sword skill is also several classes above--"

Decreased by two, and three now.

--And yet, why?"

The Temple Knight who had lost one of his legs muttered frustratingly on the floor.

"There's no way the ally of justice blessed by God Parion's protection could lose to bad guys siding with demon lords!"

--Hero is an embodiment of absurdity.

He recalled what Tactician Touya once said.

"Regrettably, this is it."

He pushes the small magic depth charge switch he got from Tactician Touya.

He doesn't know the meaning of the black fan shapes on yellow background mark.

"Wha, nuke?"

With a flash from the tactical nuke, the battleship vanishes.

One person jumped out of the mushroom cloud.

The hero Meiko.

She was able to survive from the point blank hit of an unbelievably huge explosion.

Although her armor is broken, her clothes are mercilessly torn, only cloths that protect her dignity as a girl remain.

"Suicide bombing is the worss!"

While grumbling, Hero Meiko took out a new flying shoes from her

Infinite Inventory and stood mid-air, she healed her wounds using the stocked-up magic potions.

"Or rather, it hurr too much. I thought I was gonn die."

Normal humans would have died if they were hit by a tactical nuke at point blank.

The only one that could survive from one such attack is probably Viscount Pendragon.

That is if you can put him in the same category as [Normal Humans].

It appears she was able to narrowly escape by using her Unique Skill, [Unrivaed Mobility] in overlaps.

Was her articulations off because of her fear, or perhaps--.

"Now then, let's quickly beat all the demon lords. I'll rank up to the 『True Hero』 by just defeating one of the small fries, it should be easy afterwards, and expanding the difference between me and them would be the best--"

Innumerable light balls assaulted her.

"--Here it comes."

Apparently, the second round has begun.

◆◆◆ Extra ◆◆◆

"--Tsunami at Ganika Marquisdom's sea?"

"Yes, we've got a report from the branch office of Raragi Kingdom at the

south sea."

That emergency call greeted me when I had gone back to the Solitary Island Palace from Seryuu City.

This Raragi Kingdom is the biggest sugar producing area at the south sea, moreover, they're raising the superb cows that feed on sugarcanes, so I want to protect it at all cost.

I open the menu to move to Echigoya Branch of Raragi Kingdom with Unit Arrangement.

Right at that time--.

"Wawanwaawawan, wawanwaawawan, wanwanwawan."

<Or alternatively, "Wowoofwoofwowoof, wowoofwoofwowoof, woofwoofwowoof.">

--Pochi?

I got the alarm through the dragon vein from the Raka Clone installed on Pochi's Golden Armor.

This voice is of the second degree, the light one.

If it's not life-threatening, then I should save the countries that were about to be destroyed by the tsunami first.

"Waarning~?"

"It's the alarm!"

"Arisa! Check out what's happening to Pochi!"

"Okaay!"

I asked Arisa to follow up and executed the Unit Arrangement.

If it's a situation where it's dangerous without me, Arisa will contact me with [World Phone].

First, I have to erase the tsunami.

The too flashy, [<<Continental Guard>>] is the last resort, but I will use it with no hesitation if Pochi looks to be in danger.

The dragon veins nearby will be in shortage of magic power for a bit though, so I don't want to use it thoughtlessly you see.

※ The next update is planned for 1/1, but it might be postponed to 1/8 depending on the new year progress.

※ This will be the last update this year.

For my good readers, have a good new year~

15-38. Divine Punishment (7), Hero Vs Demon Lord

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※ This is not from Satou's viewpoint

"Here comes one, demon lord."

Hero Meiko looks over below.

『kiLL degozaru』

A fox demon lord with swords as its arms makes an imposing pose while spreading its sickle-like arms.

<TLN: Typo'd as weasel in the previous chapter. Fox is the correct one.>

--KILLKILLKILL !

With the demon lord's roar, its chest split apart and a bright red ball of light is shot toward Hero Meiko.

"Shoot out 100 times that if you want to hit me!"

Hero Meiko easily evaded it but the light ball suddenly turned around and pursued her sky orbit.

The fallen light ball hit the ground and created a white crater with a huge sound.

"Fuhn, that's some power. But--"

The hero's sword cuts the demon lord's sword arm.

"There's no point if it doesn't hit."

Hero Meiko smirks, it seems she's satisfied to be able to say a line from a famous anime.

--KILRKILLKIRL !

Hero Meiko wounds the rampaging demon lord one sidedly.

"Your demon lordness is just all show isn't it. You're totally weak."

——KIRLKILRKIRR !

The demon lord's body is wrapped in purple light.

"Unique Skill now of all time? You should've used it from the start, this isn't a game you know."

The demon lord attacked without reacting to the hero.

While leaving game-like blur effect--afterimage body doubles.

"Geh, gross."

Hero Meiko, with her limited vocabulary, backed away, and then she held her holy sword upward to counter it.

It's as if she's saying that this is the way to hold Holy Sword Excalibur. The purple haired little girl house-sitting in the solitary island palace would have agreed with her if she were here.

--Dazzling holy light surrounds the hero once again.

Far stronger light than when she used her Unique Skill up until now.

There's a jewel like blue crest of light on the surface of her skin if you look closely.

"It'll be the same no matter how many times you try!"

Just like before, she randomly evades the attack and counters by swinging her holy sword down.

Yet--.

"Guha"

Hero Meiko rolled on the ground while screaming unbecoming of a girl.

"Ouch, what're you doing to a girl."

Blood is dripping from the huge wound on the back of Hero Meiko who's standing up unsteadily.

"This time, it's my--"

She's cut on the back once again, Hero Meiko fell on the ground while raising smoke of white salt.

Hero Meiko was literally applying salt on her wound in agony.

The holy light that envelopes her is flickering like a broken electric spark.

『seEmsYoucan'tEVadeATTacksoutsIDeofcognizanceDEEgozaruNA』

Sword arm demon lord laughed loudly, saying 'it seems you can't evade attacks outside of cognizance'.

"You spoiled it! I won't fall for the same trap."

Hero Meiko stood up while taking an acceleration magic potion.

Hero Meiko suddenly got close to the demon lord with Flickering

Movement and unleashed a slashing attack.

However, it seemed she assessed something, she pulled back her sword and rolled to the side.

『ForeSIGht DEgozarukA? ormaYYYYYYBe just good intuitionDEgozarukA』

It seems Hero Meiko had anticipated the reverberation of the space magic the sword arm demon lord was going to use.

It's the same technique the red-body demon skillfully used against Hero Nanashi once.

『evading Wlthout AttacKINg YourE CORNERed DAAEgozaru』

The hero who evaded the demon lord's sword arm was kicked by a fox leg clad in purple light from her blind spot.

Hero Meiko spat out saliva mixed with salt, standing up unsteadily.

"I have to create some distance--If I can't defeat you at close distance, I'll do it from afar."

Hero Meiko retreated back using Flickering movement and took out countless magic cannons from her [Infinite Arsenal (Inexhaustible Swords)].

sure of her victory the hero grinned, then suddenly her view was blurred and the demon lord appeared right in front of her.

"Wha--"

The demon lord speaks to Hero Meiko who couldn't react to the abrupt development.

『pULLed, DAAEgozaru.』

"Ahahaha, this, can't be real right?"

Her hand that was going to grasp the magic cannons grasps upon empty air.

No wonder, as the magic cannons that have been taken out are left behind far away.

"Geha."

Receiving an overhead blow from behind, Hero Meiko's upper body was buried in the white salt ground.

Her legs above ground aren't moving at all.

The holy light enveloping Hero Meiko finally loses its light and disappears.

『theEND, DAAAAZEgozaru』

The demon lord swings its sword arm.

"....■■■■■■ Explosion!"

Clear sounds resounded in the battlefield, an explosion wrapped up the demon lord.

It's a special spell of the previous hero's follower, Ringrande.

"Even like that, she's still a Saga Empire's hero. I can't let you easily kill her."

Her armor is broken, half of her beautiful silver hair is dirtied by red blood.

No one knows how she could escape the nuclear explosion, but she's by no mean only slightly wounded.

"DAAAAZEdegozaru"

The sword arm demon lord clad in dark purple light showed up, cutting the explosion apart.

The sword demon lord has already lost its ability to speak recognizably.

Ringrande continuously shot [Quick Burst] that could be chanted quickly at the attacking Sword Demon Lord, but none of it hit the demon lord.

--DAAEGWOOOZAAAALW.

She could barely protect Hero Meiko from one of its attack, let alone counterattacking.

She changed to space magic midway and rolled under the smoke from the explosion she created herself while carrying Hero Meiko toward the imperial capital.



"Aryarya? Where is this nanodesu?"

Suddenly appearing in the sky of the Weasel Empire's capital.
A master and her servant came from a gate that no one noticed.

Golden Knight Yellow and her Beast Steed, lesser dragon Lyuryu.

"Somehow, it doesn't seem like Seryuu City nanodesuyo?"

Golden Knight Yellow tilted her head in puzzlement.
She never thought that she would be led to a different place by the little girl.

--LYURYURYUUU.

"Somehow, there's a lot of enemies nodesu."

The white dragon inclined its wing toward the enemies.

"Lyuryu there's a big meat over there nodesu! So many wonderful sukiyaki and hamburg steak, Pochi doesn't know what to do nodesu."

Even when she saw the huge Great Weasel Demon Lord, the Golden Knight Yellow naught uttered fear nor awe, but appetite.

Is she a big-shot or is she just a glutton, no one can judge for sure.

『--Connection Lost. GPS Signal Lost.』

"Armor person is saying some difficult things nodesu."

The Raka Clone installed in the golden armor reported the lost of the connection to the Solitary Island Palace.

"Aryarya? It doesn't connect to Master nodesuyo?"

Since she didn't understand the situation, Golden Knight Yellow tried to contact her Master, but she was at a loss when it was impossible to make a call.

She hurriedly turned back, but the door she came out of had already disappeared.

"Pochi is in trouble nodesu. But Master or Tama should quickly notice and come here nanodesuyo."

Golden Knight Yellow muttered as if she was convincing herself.

--LYURYURYUUU.

The white dragon reported an explosion on the ground to its master. There, Ringrande was protecting Hero Meiko behind her back with her broken sword pointed toward the demon lord.

"Some girls are being bullied by a purple monster nodesu!"

--LYURYURYUUU.

"Armor person! Please nanodesu!"

『Yes My Girl. Dimension Catapult Activate.』

One flickering silver board appeared in front of each of them.

"Lyuryu!"

--LYURYURYUUU.

The moment both of them touched the board, they got accelerated to faster than speed of sound.

The two of them arrived before the sword arm demon lord and the girls, and scooped out Hero Meiko and Ringrande.

Normally it was a speed that should be unbearable for a normal man, but it was made possible due to her master's scheme and magic knowledge, and above all, the tempered steel body of Golden Knight Yellow who played around with a lesser dragon without any equipment.

"D-dragon?"

"It's Ringraden person nanodesu."

Golden Knight Yellow called her name wrong, but Ringrande whose consciousness was hazy didn't notice it.

『puLL, DAAEgozaru.』

The Golden Knight Yellow who was flying in the sky above was teleported before the sword arm demon lord.

"That was surprising nanodesu."

Golden Knight Yellow blocked the swinging attack of the sword arm demon lord with her holy sword.

Blue and purple light crossed, the flash and the spark burn the surroundings.

Cliiiink, an ear-splitting sound reverberated, Golden Knight Yellow's ears under her helmet flopped down.

Another sword of the sword demon lord was coming behind her.



"Such attacks won't work on Pochi nodesu."

Golden Knight Yellow turned around and blocked the attack that was coming from her blind side with the second holy sword.

The sword she used to block it is Holy Sword Pochi--contrary to its very cute appearance with its paw-shaped guard, it's the latest original holy sword comparable to the [Divine Gift Holy Sword].

Looks like she's still hiding her strongest fang.

『attackOUTsideCOGnizanceWhYCOuldEvaDEgozaruna』

Sword arm demon lord was surprised to see Golden Knight Yellow blocking its attack when her attention was robbed by the first attack.

"It's the most basic of basic to fight against space magicians nanodesu."

Golden Knight Yellow is looking at the sword arm demon lord with a triumphant look under her helmet.

Of course, even a demon lord that could freely manipulate space magic was not almighty enough to see the face under the helmet.

Wary of the Golden Knight Yellow, the Sword Arm Demon Lord jumped back with a short-range warp, taking some distance away from her.

"If Pochi can't do that much, Arisa will take all her desert and puddings nodesu. In this world all Yakiniku meal set is delicious nodesu."

She said some nonsensical things midway, but Golden Knight Yellow said that quite seriously.

--LYURYURYUUU.

The white dragon looks anxiously at the two people it's carrying.

"Alright nodesu. Pochi wants Lyuryu to take the two to a safe place nodesu."

"W-wait. That's a demon lord. You absolutely can't win alone."

Hero Meiko interrupted as she was instructing the white dragon.

"Demon lord nanodesu? That's bad nodesu. Pochi thought that was a monster nodesuyo."

"I'm amazed that you survived. I guess I should say as expected of a Dragon Knight?"

Golden Knight Yellow didn't listen to Hero Meiko.

"Is demon lord-san a bad demon lord nanodesu? Pochi was told not to

fight the good demon lord nodesu."

"A-are you stupid? Of course all demon lords are bad you know?"

"The one who says stupid is the real stupid one nodesuyo?"

Sword Arm Demon Lord is staring at their carefree dialogue curiously.

It seems there is no one here who is aware about the violation of a mutual non-interference verbal contract between the Weasel Emperor and the Golden Knight Yellow's master.

After all, Golden Knight Yellow was sleeping when that was talked about, and her master didn't tell her about it after she woke up.

However, a God not her master is couldn't possibly guess that she, who doesn't have the mean to teleport, would be moved to the weasel empire on a far away side of the continent when he wasn't looking.

In reality though, the weasel emperor had already broken the contract when he asked her master to help his citizens.

"Didn't it attack just now! Only a bad demon lord comes attacking!"

"Is that true nanodesu?"

Golden Knight Yellow nods at the sword demon lord.

"Can't be helped nodesu. The way of sword is smeared with blood nodesu."

Golden Knight Yellow muttered seriously while looking at the glittering gauntlet of her golden armor.

"I'm going to help. I'm still a hero of Saga Empire. I won't fall behind a native hero who hasn't been given God's Authority."

"Then here's a healing magic potion for you nodesu."

Hero Meiko drank the the magic potion she got from Golden Knight

Yellow without any question.

She's a typical careless modern Japanese person who hasn't gotten accustomed to another world.

"W-what's this?"

Glitter effects wrap Hero Meiko, all of her wounds are healed.
Forget about that, even her broken articulation was restored.

"Blood Elixir Rev. nanodesu. Any wound will be healed as long as you haven't died nodesuyo."

"What's with that doubtful-sounding name."

"Don't mind, we're in a battle nanodesu."

Hearing Golden Knight Yellow said that, suddenly realizing it Hero Meiko turned around.

The sword arm demon lord is still waiting.

『dragonUTeeeeDEGOZARU』

Apparently, the sword arm demo lord is preoccupied with the white dragon.

"Lyuryu, take Ringraden person to a safe place nodesu."

--LYURYURYUUU.

The white dragon soars away with Ringrande in its hand.

The sword demon lord who likes dragons doesn't seem like it's going to obstruct the white dragon's flight.

"Then, let's go nodesuyo."

『coming DWEEDgozaru』

Blue light envelops the whole body of Golden Knight Yellow.

"Eh? A Native Hero's Unique Skill?"

Hero Meiko seems to be misunderstanding it, but the light just now is not from the usage of Unique Skill.

"Armor person, please nanodesu."

『Yes My Girl. Dimension Catapult Activate.』

A flickering silver board appeared in front of Golden Knight Yellow.
The same acceleration board like earlier.

"Body double technique nanodesu!"

『Physical Mirror Image.』

Golden Knight Yellow split into 64 bodies at three axis.

Frighteningly enough, the majority of them have mass and magic power.

The sword demon lord who's also a space magician lies in wait for Golden Knight Yellow's attack with traps in ambush.

"Today's sure fire technique Magic Edge Spiral Strike (Vorpel Strike)
Exerion, stand by nanodesu!"

『Yes My Girl. Extra Mode Activate.』

Various reinforcement magic envelop Golden Knight Yellow.

The original name was [Extra Mode] but Golden Knight Yellow is convinced that it's [Exerion] due to a purple haired little girl's scheme.
The Raka Clone installed in the Golden Armor interpreted that the request was for [Extra Mode] with its fuzzy function.

"W-what's with this reinforcement magic? Unbelievable.... How did my

status became three times as high? T-this is like raising your level for several times."

It appears Raka Clone had judged her as a comrade, Hero Meiko also got the effect of Extra Mode.

At the surprised Hero Meiko, Golden Knight Yellow only tilted her head and that was it.

She probably doesn't really understand what she is surprised about.

"Let's go nodesuyo!"

The 64 Golden Knight Yellow who jumped to the silver board with Flickering Movement appeared before the sword demon lord in an instant.

"Ah, stupid!"

Golden Knight Yellow jumped into the distorted space trap that Hero Meiko evaded in the nick of time earlier.

The figure of Golden Knight Yellow getting stabbed by her own holy swords flashed in Hero Meiko's mind.

The dark purple light released by the demon lord and the blue light released by Golden Knight Yellow dye the battlefield blindingly.

※ Next, [15-39. Divine Punishment (8), Dog Hero Pochi] is planned for 1/8.

※ I'd like to have Satou's turn soon.

15-39. Divine Punishment (8), Dog Hero Pochi

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※ This time it's not from Satou's perspective

"Choiyaa, nanodesu!"

Blue and purple sparks dyed the battlefield.

Breaking through the reverberation of the distorted space, numerous holy swords assail the demon lord's sword arms.

Golden Knight Yellow and her split bodies unleashed a single blow on the sword demon lord, landing behind it.

『why**DWEED**gozaru』

The sword demon lord sets up the reverberation traps using Space Magic that Pochi and her split bodies ignored like a trick in front of them once again.

Her split bodies might have decreased, but there's still 47 of them remaining.

"This much is nothing nanodesu!"

Pochi and her split bodies accurately see through the space traps and annihilate them with their holy swords.

『ho**WWEED**gozaru』

"It's father bought the sacrifice of 72 pudding-sans nodesuyo."

Pochi probably mistook [Chichikawareta (father bought)] for

[Tsuchikawareta (As a result of)].

If this were a web novel, there's no doubt that comments correcting the typo would pour in like rain.

The desperate struggle against the purple haired girl, Arisa and her [Game of Tag] flashed in Pochi's mind.

Every time she lost a fight, her snacks and puddings were mercilessly taken.

"direct match **DWEED**gozaru."

The sword demon lord's arms increased to six, each arms held a different weapon.

"Yes, nanodesu."

Together with the 47 split bodies, she shifts to close combat against the sword demon lord.

It's a high speed battle that no ordinary human can see.

The split bodies disappear one after another, but each of them damaged the sword demon lord.

"Uwaa, I can't move well."

Hero Meiko also wanted to participate in the battle, but she couldn't get used to her tripled stats and fell to the ground many times.

"Ugege, watch out you."

Hero Meiko futilely shouted while evading the raining Magic Edge Cannons and the sword demon lord's flame bullets with her Unique Skill, [Unrivaled Mobility].



"Uwawa, nanodesu."

"emperor **DWEED**gozaru."

The Great Demon Lord who had lost its lower body was blown to between the two who were fighting fiercely.

"The big meat-san came nodesu."

Pochi who had lost a lot of calorie from the high speed battle licked her lip under the helmet.

The blown salt disappeared, the intellectual eyes of the Great Weasel Demon Lord look at Pochi from below.

"Golden armor...."

"Meat-san talked nodesu!"

Pochi was surprised.

"Are you an attendant of Hero Nanashi?"

"Yes nanodesu! Pochi is Master's sword, Golden Knight Yellow nanodesu!"

"Is that right."

The Great Weasel Demon Lord partly closed his eyes after hearing Pochi's answer.

"WOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

Hero Meiko wrapped in blue light is about to cut the Great Weasel Demon Lord.

A clear sound echoed in the battlefield, purple and blue light shined on the Great Demon Lord's body.

The sword demon lord intercepted her holy sword.

"Tsk, you glittering little thing over there! Hold back the sword demon lord properly!"

"Pochi is troubled if you tell her that nodesu. Please wait a bit nodesuyo."

The troubled Pochi's ears flopped down under the helmet at Hero Meiko's unreasonable demand.

"Mou, you're useless!"

"eliminateDWEEDgozaru."

Receiving fierce attacks from the sword demon lord, Hero Meiko separates away from Pochi.

"Is weasel-san a demon lord person nodesu?"

"Umu, I'm the Great Weasel Demon Lord."

"Are you a bad demon lord nanodesu? Master told Pochi not to fight good demon lords nodesu."

"Like I said! Bad demon lord's friends are all bad people!"

Hero Meiko who had come nearby interfered Pochi's question.

"It's as that girl has said, demon lords are evil from Gods and Heroes's perspective."

The Great Weasel Demon Lord addressed Pochi's question with a quiet voice.

"However, good and evil depend on your viewpoint. From the perspective of people who rebel against the Gods that restrain people's growth and

happiness, we are the light of hope."

"Hahn! No matter how many sophism you spin, you're the bad one here for breaking the rule of this world!"

Hero Meiko shouted while fighting the sword demon lord.

It's as if this is an anime or manga, but her ears probably also got improved from the tripled stats.

"killDWEEDgozaru."

"YOUUUUUU!"

The sword demon lord caught up with her, and they parted away from the two again.

"Pochi doesn't really understand if it's too difficult nodesu."

"I see--."

The Great Weasel Demon Lord closed his eyes while regenerating his lower body.

"Then let me say this. I bear no hostility towards Hero Nanashi. Although we cannot be called friends, we're like acquaintances."

"You know Master nodesu? Then Pochi won't fight nodesu."

"Is that right, that is most excellent--it's about time."

The Great Weasel Demon Lord turns his head.

His eyes were looking at the last demon lord that was blown away to the horizon as the yellow giant arrived at the center of the palace.

The yellow giant that arrived at the ruined palace repeatedly hit the ground with both its arms.

"It's like a child throwing a tantrum."

The Great Weasel Demon Lord that has finished regenerating his lower body stands up.

"What's the yellow person doing nodesu?"

"There is something that guy seeks below that place."

"A big meat nanodesu?"

The Great Weasel Demon Lord pleasantly laughed at Pochi's words full of her appetite.

"That guy wants only one thing. Depriving the 『Dragon's Vein Connection』 that Troll Demon Lord has."

"Dragon's Vein, nanodesu?"

Pochi tilts her head, she's heard the words somewhere before.

....Unfortunately, it seems she can't recall it.

"It's an authority that the Dragon God had only ever given to one god; the Demon God once."

"That's amazing nodesu."

The Great Demon Lord talked while putting up a mysterious air, but Pochi responded randomly with a low tension voice.

Getting whatever response after especially talking about the secret like that, the Great Demon Lord tasted the feeling of letdown.

If his subordinates were to see his slightly pitiful face, they would likely think that it was rare.

A flash-like small light wraps the yellow giant.

"It's coming--if you have a way to defend yourself, use it. If you don't, hide behind my body."

"Why nanodesu?"

The Great Weasel Demon Lord moves to cover Pochi behind his back. Apparently, he's taken a liking to the pure Pochi.

"Explosions that will shake the earth are coming."

"That's terrible nanodesu!"

It's as if Pochi's surprise was the switch as several flashes ran through center of the yellow giant--God Zaikuon, thunderous roars erased the surrounding sounds.

Most of the forces and the explosions were directed right above the yellow giant, but they were strong enough to blow away every salt buildings around.

"--GWUOOOO"

White pebbles broke through the purple light defending the Great Weasel Demon Lord, Pochi who was being covered behind him jumped to his side.

"Weasel person is in danger nodesu! 『Phalanxusu~』"

Pochi climbed on the giant body of the Great Weasel Demon Lord, and then she stretched her short arms and spread open the disposable defensive shield, Phalanx.

Even only for a short time, this can actualize the same defensive power as the later model of Castle that Golden Knight White Nana has.

"Auch, nanodesu."

However, the white pebbles broke through that impregnable defense. It's the same white splinters that pierced through the Great Weasel Demon Lord.

Pochi who slipped off the Great Weasel Demon Lord, flicked away a white splinter that pierced through the demon lord with holy sword Durandal.

"Awawa, the holy sword broke nodesu."

"Conceal yourself behind my body obediently, there's only a few of them but those are the splinters of Dragon Fangs--the ultimate weapon that pierces even God."

While saying that, the Great Weasel Demon Lord increased the thickness of his purple aura.

Intermittent sounds of explosions are still continuing even now, the white Imperial Capital seen from behind the Great Weasel Demon Lord is hidden by horrible salt and soil smoke.

"Alright then nanodesu!"

Pochi hit on a good idea hearing the Great Weasel Demon Lord, she dropped the holy sword and put her hand inside the Golden Armor's storing pocket.

A white splinter that pierced through the Great Weasel Demon Lord's body was flicked away by the white sword that Pochi took out.

"This time Pochi will protect you nodesu!"

The Phalanx that has lost its effect disappears in front of Pochi who goes around in front of the Great Weasel Demon Lord.

With a speed that can't be seen with naked eyes, Pochi intercepts the white buckshots that are coming flying faster than the speed of sound.

"Don't tell me that's a Dragon Fang Sword--"

The Great Weasel Demon Lord muttered.

It's as he's guessed, the sword Pochi uses, Dragon Fang Sword--is a sword made from a lesser dragon fang created by the Ancient Dragon using Primeval Magic.

It can be said to be the completed form of the swords used by the Empire's Temple Knights.

"Uoryaa, nanodesu."

With spirited yells, Pochi intercepted all the shots.



"It didn't die even after getting hit by that directly huh...."

The Great Weasel Demon Lord is looking at the yellow giant bending down on the ground of the imperial palace's remain.

Even though the yellow light has weakened like it's going to disappear, it continues to pulse as if asserting its life force.

"We'd probably win if we had several more shots of that, but I cannot ask for too much."

The Great Weasel Demon Lord stands up while bleeding out.

"You shouldn't move nanodesu! You're hurt all over nodesuyo!"

Seeing the gushing blood, Pochi rummages through the Golden Armor's pocket in panic.

She finally found the health recovery magic potion and generously use it on the Great Weasel Demon Lord's wounds.

The magic potion showed its effect before long, the bleeding stopped.

"Thank you. Little hero."

"Yes nanodesu. But, Pochi is not a hero, she's Golden Knight Yellow nodesuyo?"

"Is that so, pure one. I will carve that name on my soul, Golden Knight Yellow, Pochi."

Pochi panicked when she heard that.

"Pochi's name is a secret nanodesu! Being known is bad nanodesuyo."

The Great Weasel Demon Lord laughs happily.

"Then I will keep that name a secret. I vow to never speak of it to anyone."

"Thank you nanodesu."

『DAAAAZEgozaru.』

The sword demon lord who's bleeding all over landed beside the Great Weasel Demon Lord.

Only one of its six arms remains.

"There's blood all over nanodesu.... But, there's no more magic potion nodesu."

Pochi shoved her hand in the Golden Armor Pocket and got flustered. Her figure looks like a certain panic-prone cat robot.

"Don't worry, the bleeding has already stopped."

The Great Weasel Demon Lord puts his giant paw on top of Pochi who's on the verge of tears.

"Besides, I only need to give the decisive blow on that guy next."

The gentle eyes of the Great Weasel Demon Lord sharply changed the moment they turned at the yellow giant, like he was a different person.

"Wa it! De mon, lord...."

Pushing through the salt ground, Hero Meiko who looked like a ghost stood up.

Apparently, she also survived the attack earlier by continuously using her Unique Skill, [Unrivaed Mobility].

However, that required a great compensation--.

"The hero girl is in tatter nanodesu!"

--Blue lines emerge on Hero Meiko's body, blue lights are leaking from her mouth and eyes, just like how she was before drinking Pochi's potion.

"de, mon lord..... DEMONLOOOOOOOOOOORD"

Hero Meiko screamed and then blue light are emitting furiously from the lines and holes on her body.

"Fallen hero huh--how pitiful."

The Great Weasel Demon Lord quietly muttered.

"Awawa, something's bad with hero girl nanodesu."

Pochi doesn't know what to do, and the fact that she can't ask help from her master Satou and her comrades makes her restless.

Even though she knows how to fight, she's still a little child who lacks experience, so it's understandable.

"Parion's heroes won't become demon lords even if their Soul Vessel is broken."

The Great Weasel Demon Lord gave a signal to the sword demon lord to lead Hero Meiko to the other side of the battlefield.

"The vessel of a fallen hero is completely broken, they change into a hunting machine that will continue to hunt demon lords until they breathe their last. Any kind of healing magic no longer works on them."

The Great Weasel Demon Lord is looking at Hero Meiko who's destroying the sword demon lord without being afraid of getting injured.

Pochi looks at the rampaging Hero Meiko while crying and shouting.

"Pochi, Pochi couldn't do anything at all nodesu."

She's exhausted all her medicines, and she can't communicate with her master and comrades.

Pochi was at a loss.

That cannot be helped.

In a world where it's common to lose your life to the unreasonable violences, her master prioritized to make her learn the way to survive.

Even though that sacrificed everything else, the fact that she's able to survive in a battlefield where demon lords and God are rampaging in just less than two years is a proof of the success of that objective.

If we're talking game-like, I guess it's the result of putting all growth points toward combat-oriented abilities?

"If you can't do anything, then do not ever forget that chagrin."

The Great Weasel Demon Lord who's overlooking Pochi gives an advice.

"And learn."

With tears in the corners of her eyes, Pochi looks up at the Great Weasel Demon Lord.

"In order to catch up with your ideal self someday...."

"Yes nanodesu."

One feeling buds inside Pochi who's clenching her fists.

Whether that withers or grows into a great tree depends on her own will and supports from her surroundings.

Pochi is looking up at the Great Weasel Demon Lord with eyes full of determination.

And then--.

As if waiting for that, the space beside Pochi broke like it was made of glass.

And the one who emerged from there was--.

※ Next update is planned for 1/15.

15-40. Divine Punishment (9), Reinforcements

*

※ The viewpoint will change to the later part of Weasel Empire on ◇, please take note.

Satou's here. I've always been scolded by my parents since I was small. I got scolded for disobeying my parents, like playing at a dangerous river, going to a mountain and making a secret hideout, not tidying up my room, or not taking a bath quickly.

For me who have been scolded overwhelmingly more than I scold someone, whenever I recall those days, I ponder really hard why was I that unruly.

I might be oblivious of it, but the current me is probably thanks to my parents and teachers who patiently kept on scolding me of those days.

◇

"--Geh, the country would be destroyed before the tsunami came."

I was shocked at the points shown on my radar when I teleported to the magic kingdom Raragi with Unit Arrangement.

On top of dozens of level 30-50 krakens, there's a peculiar super huge level 92 kraken called [Sea King] that covers half of the island.

Moreover, it seems this [Sea King] is a familiar of the [Dog-Head Demon Lord].

I have to exterminate them fast--huh?

For some reason, Pochi's marker is at the Weasel Empire.

I left her alone since there was no more considerable threats around Seryuu City, just how the heck did she end up getting to that place....

She probably fell into a trap of a third party, but more than that, I'm surprised that there's someone else that can move that far besides me and Arisa.

"For now, let's bring her back with Unit Arrangement."

I open the map and check Pochi's surroundings.

For some reason, Pochi and her white dragon Lyuryu are not the only ones there, Lady Ringrande, Sera's big sister and Hero Meiko, Saga Empire's hero are there too.

Furthermore, it seems a big airship that carries Princess Maryest has landed slightly away from them.

Since there are demon lords near them, Pochi was probably sent in to help Hero Meiko and Lady Ringrande.

Judging from the situation, God Parion is the most suspicious.

I was going to confirm the situation with space magic, but then the roof of Echigoya Firm got blown away.

"I've got to quickly clean up this side too."

Since my skill, [Threaded Think], only splits my thinking by multi-threading instead of like having several brains at once--in short, it's only at the level of an [expert of dividing works], it's not possible for me to do several things with a large burden like searching the map and using advanced magic at once.

『Master! It seems Pochi is outside Seryuu City!』

Arisa reached me with [World Phone].
She's like a windfall, I tell her the situation.

Meanwhile, I transform to Hero Nanashi figure and fly in the sky.
I lock on the krakens that come into my field of view with advanced force magic [<<Multiple Javelins>>], but the processing time is a bit slower than usual.

『Open a gate near Pochi, and bring Liza and Tama with you to retrieve Pochi and everyone around!!』
『Okay, I got it!』

Arisa willingly consented my instruction.
I recalled my worry hearing her somewhat high spirited voice, so I give her a warning.

『Arisa, I think you understand already--』
『Of course! It's fine, leave it to me.』

The Sea King's giant sea spear came flying during that time, so I smashed it with [Break Magic].

--Ge geh.

The [Giant Sea Spear] that got its structure destroyed changes into a mass of ocean water and pours down to the ground.
I frantically stretch [Magic Hand] and store the ocean water into my storage.

Arisa cut off the communication during that time.

I'm a bit worried if she's going to be okay, but let's trust Arisa here.

I release [<<Multiple Javelin>>] that have finished locking-on.

Now all the enemy besides the Seas King should have died off.

Since there's a tanned girl and a white skinned girl stuck on the Sea King's forehead, I can't eliminate it before rescuing them.

It seems a level 82 monster called [Flame King] has invaded the neighboring country while a Roc called [Sky King] is raiding the islands of sugar road.

These Flame King and Sky King seem to be familiars of [Dog-head Demon Lord] just like the Sea King below me.

Good grief, please don't leave these kinds of troublesome legacies behind.

While evading the train-sized arms of the Sea King, I go in to save the girls on its forehead.

The tanned girl is of an unusual race called [Half-Ghost], while the white skinned one seems to be a [Homonculus] like Nana.

I hurry on to save them while averting my eyes from the demonic breasts of the tanned girl that can even compare to Lady Karina's.

◇Weasel Empire◇

"Ja-jaan! Arisa-chan arrives!"

The one who appeared from the crack in space is a little girl donning golden armor with a red mantle.

It seems she doesn't have any intention of using her temporary name, Golden Knight Red.

"Arisa! Nanodesu!"

"We've come to pick Pochi up!"

The shock absorber installed on Arisa's golden armor softly received the full body hug of Pochi.

"--Arara? The situation seems chaotic isn't it?"

Arisa who's hugging Pochi knitted her brow looking at the surroundings.

"Forgive me, Nanashi--"

The Great Weasel Demon Lord who saw Arisa muttered in his mouth.

"Little girl, look at the eastern ground."

The Great Weasel Demon Lord pointed at the shining yellow giant.

"--T-that's!"

When Arisa saw the shining yellow giant, fighting spirit boiled from within her.

Even though she's not using her Unique Skill, her golden armor is tinged with purple phosphoresce.

"DEMONLOOOOOOOOOOORD"

Hero Meiko is going to attack Arisa who's overflowing with purple aura.

"Nin nin~?"

Golden Knight Pink, Ninja Tama appeared from Arisa's shadow and evaded Hero Meiko's slashing attack with cast-off no jutsu.

No one in this place questioned the origin of the slashed large tree.

"It appears you are a hero, but if you're going to harm Golden Knight Red, we will keep you company."

Golden Knight Orange Liza who appeared after Ninja Tama said that while taking a stance with her white dragon spear.

It seems the girls who have teleported to the Weasel Empire are equipped with the highest level of equipment that they've been bestowed.

"Liza-san, please take care of that rampaging hero. I'll be that guy's opponent."

--Arisa?"

"That guy's an enemy! I absolutely must defeat it!!"

Arisa who was pointing at the yellow giant--God Zaikuon, raised her visor and shouted.

"However, master ordered us to go back once we retrieved Pochi--"

"DEMONLOOOOOOORD."

The two's conversation was cut off by the assaulting Hero Meiko.

"He might be wounded all over and dying, but that guy (God Zaikuon) is strong y'know? Even demon lords banding together weren't a match for him."

"How cowardly. Leave that guy to me."

Arisa grins and laughs.

A smile unsuited for the jovial Arisa.

"Sorry--"

"It's fine, it's fine. I also remember a promise I made when I was reincarnated."

It appears some kind of sealed memory resurfaced after she saw God

Zaikuon.

"I'll show you the things made by our cheat Master when he goes all-out."

After saying that, Arisa flies in the sky with the support of her golden armor.

"Storage Dimension Release! Deploy Staff Warship!"

『Yes My Lady. Dimension Lock Release.』

The armor responded to Arisa and then the space behind her cracked. From there, a golden staff in the shape of a spaceship appeared.

"Main Staff, boarding."

『Yes My Lady. Open Canopy.』

After Arisa said that while taking a strange pose, she disappeared before the Great Weasel Demon Lord and got on board the whole upper part of the Staff Warship that acts as a cockpit.

"Chanting support mode, set the power to the maximum."

『Aye Aye Ma'am. Transform Staff Ship.』

The bow separates, changing the ship's shape to look like a catamaran. The 1024 Sacred Tree Stone Furnaces inside the ship go into full operation all at once, the warship's bow gets clad in blue light.

The yellow giant afar rises and looks at the airship, it seems that it has sensed the enormous magic power.

"You're far too late to notice now--『Over Boost』"

Arisa's body is wrapped in purple aura, that light also covers the whole Staff Warship.

"Because! My cheat isn't only the equipment! <<First Aria>>!"

Responding to Arisa's shout, one magic circle materializes on the warship's bow.

Apparently, she used an advanced space magic chantlessly.

Normally, [Over Boost] is a Unique Skill that makes the user put all their magic power into the next magic and make them helpless after the use, but with the Staff Warship taking over that burden, that risk has been canceled off.

The Sacred Tree Stone Furnaces that have used up its Sacred Tree Stones all at once are loaded up with the next rounds of Sacred Tree Stones.

Arisa uses [Over Boost] once again.

"<<Second Aria>>!"

The second magic circle materializes, the blue magic circle turns into purple.

"I've still got more, <<Third Aria>>! <<Fourth Aria>>!"

She chants advanced space magic one after another while overlapping them with her Unique Skill.

The Staff Warship is wrapped in purple aura.

"GWUOOOOOOO"

Due to the excessive overuse of many [Over Boost], an unusual phenomenon happened to Arisa's body under her armor.

Arisa's double teeth grow a little, purple gem-shaped lines begin to surface on her body.

Raka Clone that detected the state of emergency is trying to send an emergency call, but that fails to transpire in this space where communication is obstructed.

The yellow giant who sensed the danger stepped forward staggeringly.

"N-not yet! Arisa-chan won't lose to this little pain! <<Fifth Aria>>, <<Sixth Aria>>--"

The beastkin girls who are fighting the rampaging Hero Meiko look up at the Staff Warship Arisa is riding worryingly.

The three beastkin girls are clearly stronger than Hero Meiko, but honoring their master's non-killing policy, they're unable to settle the match.

"--<<Seventh Aria>>, Merge Magic"

Arisa uttered that while having a dark laugh, and then the seven magic circles merge into one.

It appears she made chantlessly casting forbidden spell that should have been impossible to become a reality by chantlessly casting seven parts of advanced space magic spells.

"Now, die once again--"

The yellow giant creates multi layers of light shields in front of it. Shields that it didn't use in its fight against the demon lord.

It shows how dangerous Arisa's attack is.

And then, the third purple light flows.

--Never Give Up.

A Unique Skill for the sake of defeating a superior enemy.

"Forbidden spell of space magic--『Mythology Down』"

A torrent of purple golden light are shot from the Staff Warship's bow.

"WOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!"

Arisa fires the magic while enduring the enormous magic power flowing in her body.

The distorted purple golden light reaches God Zaikuon while erasing everything in its path.

The yellow and purple golden lights clashed for an instant before the shields of yellow light were broken.

The light not only overruns the Material Plane but also the surrounding Ethereal Plane, and finally arrives at the sub-space where the God's substance rests.

--ZAZZZZZAYEEE.

The God's scream echoes in the whitened earth.

The God's arms break, its legs are blown off and fall to the ground.

"A-a lone human winning against God!!!"

Seeing that scene, the Great Weasel Demon Lord shouted in surprise.

"A-Arisa--"

Liza was looking at the Staff Warship whose first half has melted and ceased functioning.

Still, thanks to the overprotective design of the girls' master, the cockpit where Arisa resides is completely flawless.

Arisa who's safe inside the cockpit stares up at the sky while leaning her body on the cockpit's seat without confirming the result of her attack.

"The sky is--"

The scene of clouds getting parted and a ring of light appearing from there are reflected on Arisa's eyes.

--I'd only take wanko soba for the second helping please."

Arisa's hidden muttering reached no one's ear.



Even after receiving the barrage of dragon's fangs land mine and the anti-god magic, [Mythology Down] that Arisa used, the yellow giant, God Zaikuon still survives.

The yellow giant wrapped in light is flickering like it's at the end of its life. Were it received several more attacks of the same scale, even a God would probably perish.

But the ring of light that broke through the cloudy sky overturned that.

Six multi-colored orbs of light are floating on the ring of light, a belt of light that materializes from that ring pulls the body of God Zaikuon to itself like the tractor beam from science fiction.

Several of the surviving demon lords tried to attack God Zaikuon with

long-ranged attacks, but the cocoon-like light covering God Zaikuon thwarted them all.

God Zaikuon that arrived at the ring turned into an orb of light.

The seven orbs of light slowly begin to rotate on the ring, and then, the surrounding clouds are dyed with richly colored lights.

"As I thought, those light orbs are Gods--"

The Great Weasel Demon Lord couldn't finish his muttering.

A pillar of light released by the whirlpool of light turns the Weasel Empire into a deep deep crater, that forces spreads unstoppably to the whole of Weasel Empire, changing everything into a wasteland.

That day, the weasel empire was erased from the continent.

※ The next update is scheduled for 1/22.

15-41. Divine Punishment (10), End

*

Satou's here. I love plain and simple foreign Hollywood movies. There are many things to retort if you think hard about it, but I just can't get enough of the easy-to-understand series of hardships and the catharsis afterward. Happy End really is the best after all.



"Phew, most of the tsunamis have been taken care of now I think?"

I saved the two girls from the Sea King, eliminated the Dog-head familiars, an islet-sized size roc [Sky King], and a tyrannosaur-like creature clad in fire [Flame King], and then I flew about to the south sea and took care of the tsunamis.

I even had to eradicate a fleet of ancient undeads and ghosts on an emerging floating island in the middle of the way, it was troublesome.

How do I say this, the south seas are hellish.

A marker window popped up in my vision when I was grumbling.

--Red alert?

"Geh, this is bad!"

I get back to the solitary island palace with Unit Arrangement.

"Hikaru! Please take care of the rest of the Ganika Marquisdom."

"Un, I got it--"

After saying that to Hikaru who was standing by in the island palace, I teleported to the Weasel Empire with space magic.

Frankly, I don't want to let Hikaru go out but Arisa is in a dangerous situation right now.

Since Hikaru has blessing from her Patron God, [Ama no Mizuhana-hime] besides the one from God Parion, I believe she will be fine.

At the other side of the teleport gate, there are Arisa's half-melted Staff Warship doing emergency landing, the beast girls and the Weasel Emperor who's turned into a demon lord around the ship, and Hero Meiko who's spreading blue light around, looking dangerous.

Lyuryu and Lady Ringrande seem to be at the large airship in the distant.

I looked up at the sky and saw seven light orbs floating.

Since their indications show, [UNKNOWN], they're probably either the Gods or the God's familiars.

The ring of light turns into a rich colored whirlpool.

--Crisis perception.

That one's dangerous.

I extend [Magic Hand] toward everyone it can reach.

While the crisis perception was striking my back, I somehow--got them.

--This is bad.

Something falls from the sky.

--Dangerous, dangerous, dangerous.

I hit the Unit Arrangement by a hair's breadth.

The moment right before the light falling from the sky touched us--it activated in time somehow.



"Phew, I hadn't panicked in a long time."

After we moved to my personal desert space, I sighed a breath of relief.

--Oops, not yet!

Next, I teleport again to save Lyuryu and the others.

--LYURYURYUUU.

Seeing me, the white dragon let out a voice of joy and jumped at me like Pochi.

--Geh.

Behind Lyuryu, beyond the crashed large airship, I saw a tsunami of white light coming.

It's probably the residual wave of the light that fell unto us.

"Oy, oy, this place is the halfway point to the neighboring city, far from the capital y'know--"

While muttering in astonishment, I caught Lyuryu and the large warship with [Magic Hand] and took them to the same place as earlier.

"Master! Please save the hero girl nodesu."

Pochi who found us jumped and asked me.

Certainly, the rampaging Hero Meiko who's leaking blue light from her mouth and eyes looks like she's on the verge of ruin.

I quickly bind Hero Meiko with shadow magic and hand over a Blood Elixir to Pochi.

"Try to let her drink this."

"Yes nanodesu!"

I hope this will cure her, but if that's not possible then I have to make her drink the forbidden [Nectar].

I can't leave the [Nectar] in other's hands since it has many problems.

However, I can't care for Hero Meiko more than this.

I need to do something about the tsunami of white light before Hero Meiko. If I leave that alone, the parishes and Dejima Island would be swallowed up.

Resolving the great disaster comes first before an acquaintance I met once.

"Arisa, strange."

I heard Tama shouting on top of the partially destroyed Staff Warship's cockpit.

I rush into the ship's cockpit with Flash Drive before I even think about it.

The preparation to use Unit Arrangement toward Dejima Island ended up being canceled, but at this time, that didn't reach my mind.

"Arisa! Are you alright!!"

"I'm fiNE."

Arisa replied with a strange accent with her head still covered in the helmet's visor.

Violet phosphoresce is leaking from the gaps of her golden armor.

--Demon lord.

That was added on Arisa's titles.

I activate Soul Seer, Magic Seer, Miasma Seer, Spirit Seer and hide Menu's indications to make the throughput even a bit more efficient.

The inside of my eyes feel painful, perhaps I'm overdoing it.
However, I don't care about that right now.

I see that magic power is leaking out from Arisa's cracked Soul Vessel, while miasma is widening that crack.
It's like some kind of purple thing is overflowing from the Vessel's crack.

--Calm down, Satou.

I frantically suppress my flustered heart.

"It's alright, Arisa. It's alright."

While murmuring as if I was convincing myself, I tore off the miasma and gently fixed the broken Soul Vessel to its original shape.

"Alright, just a bit more--"

I purged Arisa's golden armor with the Master Key.

"Don't look."

Arisa hides her lips with her hands and curls up in the cockpit's seat.

"Don't worry, I won't hate you just because your appearance changed a bit."

"Really?"

"Yeah, of course I am."

I murmur to ease Arisa and lift her head.

"Drink this. While your Soul Vessel still retains its shape."

"Un, okay."

I made Arisa drink the [Nectar].

Among my belongings, only this and Blood Elixir Rev. are capable of healing damage on a Soul Vessel.

However, the healing from Blood Elixir Rev. is only temporary.

When the Soul Vessel is damaged this much, the vessel probably won't ultimately be restored unless she drinks the [Nectar].

"--Ah, Master is entering me."

Arisa is Arisa even at a time like this.

Ignoring her nonsense, I keep watch of her Soul Vessel's restoration.

Before long, after what felt like an eternity, Arisa's Soul Vessel is restored.

"--Phew, good."

"I'm sorry."

I pat the apologizing Arisa's head.

Since it seems that she's reflected enough, I'll decide her punishment after

I've heard the reason why she overdid it.

"Don't be that rash ever again okay?"

"Un, if anything happened, tell me everything about it--"

When we were staring at each other, another emergency was displayed on the AR reading.

Come to think of it, Dejima Island and the parishes were in trouble weren't they.



"--Made it in time."

I the place closest to the Imperial Capital, Dejima Island that still have survivors, with Unit Arrangement

Lete City was about to be swallowed up by the tsunami of white light before my eyes.

I recalled the moment when the catear-kin reincarnated person was using her Unique Skill to try to delete my memory.

I've sheltered those girls with other reincarnated people, I should go see them when I have time.

"Now then, gotta do something about that."

I choose the advanced earth magic [Great Wall] on the Magic List.

"Guess this is more like the rise of Mountain Range of Nanashi instead of Great Wall of China?"

A tall wall higher than mountains rise up on several hundreds kilometers long range.

It looks quite showy, but compared to the [<<Continental Guard>>], this magic is simpler and more cost efficient.

"Now then, let's briskly clean this up."

I connect the [Great Wall] while moving with Unit Arrangement.

My magic power was used up halfway through, but since I had several fully charged holy swords on hand, I got my refill from them.

"Who would have thought that it would almost reach the Ratkin territory at the northern side."

This disaster-grade tsunami of white light must be the real Divine Punishment.

Turning several cities into white salt was probably the Divine Punishment from the apostles and one God, while the white light earlier was probably the large-scale Divine Punishment from the seven Gods.

No wonder the conditions for the Divine Punishment changes depending on who you ask.



"Fumu, these crater and the spiral-shaped grooves are terrible."

After confirming that it was safe with space magic's [Senrigan (Extra Clairvoyance)], I moved to the Weasel Empire using teleport magic.

It seems the Gods are satisfied after dropping the Divine Punishment, they've disappeared from the sky.

I put back the [Room of Truth] where the Troll demon lord was sealed from my protected sub-space to its original place.

Since I had put an absurdly strong barrier on the original place, I don't think they noticed it.

It seems that barrier has disappeared by the Gods' Divine Punishment. It's probably not the barrier itself that disappeared, but the bedrock where the barrier was placed.

"Wonder what's that warped space?"

I saw a mirage-like phenomenon in the corner of my view.

Is it an evacuation capsule in the sub-space?

It's cracked, and a survivor--is there.

"It's a miracle that she survived."

I pull out the familiar face buried in salt.

--Uwaa.

Her lower body and one of her arms have become salt and fallen apart. It's a miracle that vital parts like her head and heart are safe.

I moved to the research laboratory in the solitary island palace with Unit Arrangement while wrapping her in Fixture magic.

"Guess no need for cleaning and such."

While muttering that, I put Lady Liedill the temple knight inside a bio-

tank for Nana.

"Although it's a different story for limb loss, I guess it's not possible to regenerate organs?"

Since the [Nectar] is too dangerous, I fill the bio-tank with Blood Elixir Rev.

Afterward, the self-regeneration mode of the Bio Tank should take care of the rest.



"What should we do about the hero?"

"Right. I'll ask Echigoya Firm to nurse Hero Meiko and her cohorts. We can just deliver them to Saga Empire once they're able to move about."

Perhaps I should return Lady Ringrande to her parent's house, but for now it's probably better for her to stay in Echigoya Firm's guest room. She's probably going to be fine since I've asked Sera to care for her.

Since Hero Meiko fell into critical condition while spewing blood when I let her drink the [Nectar] for some reason, I only gave her the Blood Elixir Rev. to return her from the rampaging state as the treatment.

I stripped off the blue lines on her skin with surgery and healed her with a high magic potion afterward.

--Later, after asking Beriunan and Burainan Clans who like to research things to investigate the line, I learned that its composition is similar to crystallized blue liquid.

Back then, when I put too much magic power into Liza's [Black Spear of

Cricket], evolving it to [Magic Spear Douma], crystal lines that looked similar to magic liquid also appeared on the surface of the spear, it was probably a similar phenomenon.

"Does this mean the Divine Punishment is over now?"

"Un, probably. It seems the Stampedes in the labyrinths and many monster domains have also stopped."

I affirmed Hikaru's question.

I'm thinking of leaving the care for the stricken areas to each countries. If they request Shiga King for assistances, I'm planning to release the preserved foods and medicinal supplies I've hoarded in large quantities.



"Master, Pochi is a bad kid nanodesu."

When I was done with some works, Pochi entered my face with a serious face.

Liza and Tama are with her.

"Please give punishment to Pochi nodesu."

"Does Pochi understand what bad things she did?"

"Pochi left her post without telling Master nodesu."

It's true that she violated her order, but my responsibility is heavier for postponing things even though I was aware that something happened to Pochi.

Abstaining from nightlife for one month is too light, I should ask Hikaru to think up of something later.

Now then, putting aside my reflection, right now it's about Pochi.

"Why did you leave your post?"

"Pochi was called by a little girl nodesu."

I couldn't really understand from Pochi's explanation, but looking at the rough image from the Battle Recorder installed in the golden armor, it was a girl that looked similar to the little girl in painting.

"Did she give her name?"

"She didn't nodesu. But, she said Pochi was a 『True Hero』 nodesu."

Fumu, the ones who know that are only us--no, Pochi becoming a hero was recorded on a certain slate written by the [Troll Demon Lord]. Since the fact that Pochi defeated the rat demon lord was also written, authorized people of Weasel Empire should be aware about it even if they're not the Gods themselves.

But well, there's a good chance that it was God Parion.

On this continent, the only people capable of opening a gate from Seryuu City to the Weasel Empire's capital are me, Arisa and the high elves. It'd be a different story if a reincarnated person with teleportation unique skill appeared in Shiga Kingdom but making an assumption about such an irregular situation like that is too conspiracy theory-like.

"And then?"

"The girl said that 『My hero is going to be killed by a bad demon lord, help』 nodesu."

I see, [My Hero] huh--chronologically speaking, it's unlikely for her to be the [Little girl in painting].

It's probably safe to regard that the [God Parion (Temp)] who set Pochi up is a different being than the [Little Girl in Painting].

Next, I listened to the things that happened in the Weasel Empire from Pochi.

"Then I will be announcing the punishment for Private Pochi."

"Aye."

Hearing me, Pochi straightened herself.

"The crime of leaving one's post and endangering one's self is not light."

"Aye."

"Therefore, 10 days of meals without meat should be proper."

Pochi's ears flopped down, she looked downward.

Liza and Tama who are next to her are looking pale like their blood run cold after hearing the severe punishment of [10 days of meals without meat].

"However--"

Pochi's ears twitch.

"--In light of Pochi's courage and kindness for rushing in to save the life of a girl in danger, the meals without meat is decreased by three days."

Pochi raises her head.

"Furthermore, appreciating your prudence of not thoughtlessly engaging the demon lords you encountered but instead properly judging as to whether they're evil or not, the meals without meat is decreased again by three days."

Pochi's ears returned to their positions.

"And, extolling your achievements of healing the injured Hero Meiko and Weasel Empire, and saving Lady Ringrande, the meals without meat is decreased again by three days."

This would probably turn up more to plus if this were the story of a super popular magic school, but completely giving a positive here is bad.

"That's why, the meal without meat is only for today. Be careful not to repeat what you did okay."

"Yes, nanodesu! Pochi wants to learn many more things nodesu!"

"Yup, you're great Pochi."

I'm glad that Pochi is interested in things other than battles, meals and her hobby, writing stories.

I pat Pochi's head hard.

"Tama will learn too~?"

Since Tama also came declaring and hugging me on the opposite side, I also praised her, "You're also great Tama."

Looks like Tama is already affected by Pochi.

※ Next update is scheduled for 1/29

※ The decisive scene against the mastermind is planned for the next

chapter.

※ 2017/2/3 The last part of has been moved to 15-43 to fit the timeline better

15-42. Mastermind

*

Not from Satou's perspective

"So you're back, Parion."

A boy-like voice greeted the being that teleported in with light. The light from the shining little girl illuminates a black-clothed boy within the dark eerie hall.

The light disappeared before long, eerie darkness returned to the even eerier hall.

"Touya-sama, please don't call me that."

The tone of the little girl who was called with the name God Parion contained respect toward her superior.

"Then, stop assuming that form."

"Yes."

When the boy in black clothes--the one called Tactician Touya in Weasel Empire ordered that, the little girl turned into a glamorous woman along with faint light.

The beautiful young face of the God also changed into a plain one with no special characteristics.

After she was done transforming, she untied a pendant-like thing from her neck and the light disappeared.

"Touya-sama, I'm returning the 『Thief God's Mirror』."

"I still have something for you to do. Take it with you."

"Yes, Touya-sama."

The pendant she has, [Thief God's Mirror] seems to be a <<Shape Change Artifact>> for transforming.

As if waiting for the two to be done, a tune that has an eerie intimidating aspect to it echoes in the hall as if it's the appearance of a bad guy.

"Looks like the Chief has come."

The two people kneel toward the throne that looks like it's assembled from humans bones situated at the depth of the hall.

A blue and a red gems on the back of the bone throne begin to blink, and then a groan-like sound comes from them.

"--What happened to the Irregular?"

The groan sounds changed into a human voice before long, the voice of an old man with strange dialect. <TLN: Kansai dialect.>

Tactician Touya raises his face and talks to the gems on the bone throne.

"We can assume that the Estrangement Plan has failed."

The woman with plain face bit her lips in vexation when she heard the word failed.

Apparently, she was involved in the [Estrangement Plan] thing.

"Did he get swallowed up in the Divine Punishment?"

"According to the spy in Shiga Kingdom, it appears he's safe."

"Safely escaping from the Seven Gods' Divine Punishment 'ey. Ain't he a tough."

The words of the guy called Chief sounded like he was astonished from the depth of his heart.

A slight awe seemed like it was mixed in it.

"Then, what 'bout the Anti-God Mine?"

"It had some effect, but it lacked the decisive factor."

They're talking about the Dragon Fang Nuclear Mine, the trump card that the Great Weasel Demon Lord used on God Zaikuon.

"Guess a direct confrontation 's impossible 'fter all, mite' work if we had 10,000 lesser dragons more as the ingredients tho'."

"That's an empty theory. Furthermore, I don't think the same thing will work again against Gods."

"Ain't that tru'. Guess we've gotta leave it to our Lord-san to fite' Gods 'fter all."

For them, the Seven Pillar Gods are opponents that must be defeated. The [Lord-san] spoken by the chief seems to be a God other than the Seven Pillar Gods--or perhaps a being that can match Gods.

"I have a report for your excellency."

Hearing the Chief, the woman with plain face spoke while still falling prostrate.

"What's it? Lemme 'ear em 'k?"

"According to the one who had infiltrated Weasel Empire, it appears a woman from Irregular's faction critically wounded the God."

As an addendum, she said that the infiltrator has ceased sending reports.

"That's amazin'. Did she turn into a True Demon Lord?"

"No, she was still a human."

The chief's voice sounded as if he heard some unbelievable thing.

"Y'kiddin' me.... Think we coulda take 'er to our faction'?"

"Let us not, that's clearly a trap--a death flag."

"Ain't yer' rite'. Best not to have anythin' to do with the Irregular 'ey."

With a pale face, Tactician Touya hurriedly stopped the chief who seemed excited.

Perhaps his tension was transmitted along, the chief's voice sounded nervous too.

"Since Shin should 'be in the Irregular's faction, d'ya think he'd be strong eno' to defeat a God in time?"

"That's not possible. He's just a normal human. He transcended humanity precisely because turned into a demon lord with the Demon Lord's Orb while he had Hero title."

"Ain't that rite', 's fine s'long as Shin has enough power to live normally."

The Chief murmured as if he was a parent worried about his child, after a moment of silence, the gems blink.

"O, yea, guess Weasel Emperor-han has really?"

"--He was hit by the Seven God's Divine Punishment. There is no way he survived."

The subject changed and Tactician Touya shook his head at the Chief's question.

Silence drifts about in the eerier room for a while.

Contrary to their concern about the emperor of another country, it seems there's no one here worried about Hero Meiko who should be from the same place as them.

"Touya, y'can take a break fer' now. You've just lost a friend n'all."

"That I cannot do. For as long as I've lived, this isn't the first time I lost a friend."

"Ain't no way you can get used to that."

At the Chief's friendly concern, the Tactician Touya's declared that there was no need for it.

The woman with plain face seems worried about Tactician Touya while she's still falling prostrate.

"I'm gonna have Emperor Rugan-han and the army work hard fer' a while, so my side--Intelligence Bureau'll be alright."

"Is it about the continuation of the chaos on the continent's west?"

"Yeap."

The Chief spoke of Saga Empire's Emperor's name familiarly.

The woman with plain face clearly looked perplexed when the Chief stated the name, [Intelligence Bureau].

From her viewpoint, it was odd for the Chief to purposely state the obvious like the name of his department.

"Won't the Irregular intervene?"

"No worries tere'. I'm gonna have the Saga Empire's heroes deployed before' the Irregular came. He's a KY guy who likes ta' crash in other's turfs 'fter all." <TLN: KY= Kuuki Yomenai, can't read the mood.>

From the flow of conversation, you can infer that the existence called Irregular is a menace whom he, who controls the entirety of Saga Empire's Intelligence Bureau, really cannot ignore.

More importantly, heroes--the Chief certainly did say that.

It seems that Saga Empire has summoned not only Hero Meiko but multiple heroes right after Hero Hayato defeated the demon lord in Dejima Island and returned home.

If academicians were to hear this, they would probably rack their brain hard as to where they got the enormous magic power needed to summon heroes and at what cost.

"Gotta be extra careful 'bout things related to Irregular."

"Yes, we have taken an extreme caution against the Irregular's proxy organization, E Firm. We're concentrating our effort in lowering E Firm's influence in the continent's west through amicable means, please don't worry."

The woman with plain face answered the Chief's question.

"And, how 'bout the plan there?"

"Then, in regards to the Labyrinth Highway Plan's progress--"

The woman with plain face stood up and answered the Chief's question.

--"About the Miasma Level at various places, they're extremely low compared to our expectations."

She displayed a screen using Force Magic in front of the bone throne, and spoke about the detailed information.

According to that display, the miasma in Dejima, Selbiraa and Seryuu are especially low.

"It's the Irregular's fault ain't it."

"There is no shred of doubt."

Tactician Touya affirmed the Chief.

"The channel to Dejima has been completely cut off. We have no choice but to stop the Labyrinth Highway Plan. We have to wait for the next opportunity."

"Yeap, dunno if it'll take 100 or 200 years, but waitin' for the Irregular's natural life to end would be the wise choice 'ere eh'."

"Umu, in 66 years the Demon Lord Season will come anyway."

"Bein' born as a long-living race 's convenient at a time like this 'ey."

It seems the 'Opportunity' they speak about is connected to the [Demon Lord Season].

Their objective probably requires the miasma to thicken.

"Then next, we're just gonna be careful 'bout Emperor Rugan-han's senile demands."

The Chief spoke as if he was persuading--no as if he was guiding someone.

"Babysitting the emperor is your job."

"Touya-han 's always strict ain't ya."

After exchanging relaxed words, the gems lost its light once the Chief said, [Then, C'ya] and stopped speaking.



"Touya-sama--will you be visiting the health resort in Buchi Forest?"

"Yes, that's right."

"T-then, could I come along with you? J-just now, I felt like having a vacation."

"Yes, that's right."

Tactician Touya answered the nervous woman with plain face as if his mind was somewhere else.

"I-I can?"

Without noticing Tactician Touya's state, the woman with plain face jumped up in delight.

"I-I must get ready and buy some clothes! Cute clothes and attractive underwear--"

When the woman with plain face was muttering her delusion with her hands on her face and her back turned toward Tactician Touya, the gems on the bone throne suddenly shined.

"--Looks like he's gone."

At the bone throne's words, the woman with plain face twitches.

"Yeah.... It felt like my heart got frozen still."

Touya collapses with his knees and hands on the ground, gasping. Sweat run on his boy-like face like a waterfall, the light in his eyes is like that of a returned soldier who has seen hell.

"It was far more terrifying compared to when I stood before God Zaikuon, as if my life--no my soul was going to be erased.... "

"Ain't that rite'. Even tho' he shouldn't know where I was, I still got scared to death 'ey."

While Tactician Touya was wiping his sweat with a handkerchief, the woman with plain face is going around restlessly in askance between the bone throne and Tactician Touya.

"U-um?"

"....He was here until a bit ago."

"Who was--could it be?!"

The woman with plain face, who couldn't follow the Chief's and Tactician Touya's conversation, hit on a certain guess.

"Yeap, the Irregular came."

"No way. My Space Perception didn't--"

The woman with plain face spoke in dismay about how her always-on passive space magic couldn't detect anything.

"Since mine's detection skills only sensed something incorrigible, it wasn't just Mana Camouflage 'ey."

"The High Elves and Ancestor King Yamato are on Irregular's faction too. They must have techniques we aren't aware of."

The Chief and Tactician Touya continued to exchange words while ignoring the woman with plain face.

"Guess we really hafta' give up the Godbeater girl 'fter all."

"Yeah, when were talking about taking her to our faction, his presence shook even only for an instant."

"Don't poke the bear eh. The risk's just too high."

Apparently, that was the reason why they went pale and quickly changed the subject.

"That's right. We have a higher probability of surviving raiding the God's Realm with white swords in hand."

"Hahahaha, ain't that rite'. Once Lord-san is restored, we're goin' into full swing."

The woman with plain face drew her cheeks when she heard the two talking about the final war in the God's Realm as if they were going to a pleasant quarrel.

"I didn't brin' it up before, but 's the Seryuu City's Labyrinth Highway Gate safe?"

"Yeah, the Labyrinth Highway--the gate to hell is safe." <TLN: Makai=hell can also be read as Demon Realm.>

Tactician Touya replied the bone throne.

"I was panicking when I heard the report about the Irregular appearing in the 『<<Dungeon Master's Room>>』, but he left just like that after confirming Douma Third the 『<<Dungeon Master>>』."

"Really, all's good then 'ey."

The Douma Third that Tactician Touya mentioned is a cricket monster that became the next [<<Dungeon Master>>] succeeding the Black Greater Demon.

"That's the labyrinth created from the important 『Dungeon Seed』 we got from Tarou-han 'fter all."

"Yes, you're right.... Either way, without the passage beyond the gate, we cannot go to the moon to release the seal."

Tactician Touya's eyes had a sorrowful look for an instant, but he quickly regained his calm.

"'s it impossible even for the elf sage Trazayuya 'ey?"

"Don't call me with that name. The foolish Trazayuya had chosen to erase his self when he turned into a demon lord."

Tactician Touya spoke as if vomiting.

"I discarded my name and sealed the memory of my former life when I reincarnated, that guy--the me of this life was an elf through and through. He even gave up life rather than living as a demon lord...."

This was in a book left by the elf sage Trazayuya.

--We elves have poor attachment to life. When we're driven into a corner, the struggle we do is surprisingly weak compared to other races.

Apparently, that included him.

"Can't Touya-han make' a Space Engine by slowly learnin' and drinkin' some good liquor this time?"

"It's impossible. How far do you think the moon is. Using Jules Verne and this girl's space magic have a higher probability of success."

Tactician Touya implied that even the Sub-Dimensional Ship Jules Vernee and the woman with plain face's space magic can't be used to go to the moon.

"The Irregular's Unique Skill could probably do, but that's not allowed 'fter all."

"Yea, that is the only thing we have to prevent no matter what."

The woman with plain face looked at the Tactician Touya like she wanted to know the reason, but he didn't speak further about that.



"Someone! Anyone come hereeeeeee! His Majesty is! His Imperial Majestyyyyyyyyy's!"

The next morning, a Saga Empire's lady's maid's scream tore off the morning quietness.

Guard soldiers and senior servants who sensed the abnormality rush into the Emperor's bedroom.

The naked bodies of the aged emperor and beautiful young ladies who have come of age are exposed in the large bedroom.

"Eh, Your Majesty."

Yet the gazes of the people who had rushed into the room weren't directed at the bodies of the beautiful young ladies, but at a huge blue sword hanging on top of the bed.

The huge sword is fixed in the air through either space magic or force magic, hanging one foot above the pale emperor's forehead.

The emperor is staring at the huge sword without blinking, his body is trembling like he's convulsing.

The emperor doesn't move an inch even though his eyes are tossing about from the tip of the sword.

"Save His Majesty!"

""OU!""

"Wait!"

Someone stopped the guards who were going to move as instructed by a senior servant.

"Empress Wilyan-sama? Why did you stop us!"

"His Majesty is paralyzed. Moreover, that big sword is linked with the paralyze magic, it will likely take His Majesty's life if you untie it carelessly."

Empress Wilyan is the mother of Princess Maryest who served as a Hero Hayato's follower.

She is an outstanding magician like her daughter.

The royal court magicians whom she called take more than two days trying to release the huge sword aiming at the emperor's forehead, during that time, the emperor has to shiver in fear without even being able to blink.

Even after the emperor has been rescued, that huge sword continues to stay at that place, any kind of magic is unable to remove it.

And dreadfully enough, it seems even the holy swords brandished by Saga Empire's heroes couldn't break that huge sword.

And, despite the gag order, this story is spread among many people.

"Did you hear?"

"Yea, about the Sword of Damocles right?"

Since the huge sword's creator's name is Damocles, people call the huge sword made from Adamantite alloy [Huge Sword of Damocles].

However, there is one thing that remains a secret here.

That is the words written on the huge sword.

Which are--[I'll overlook it this once. There is no next time.]

Those words were conveyed to the next emperor of Saga Empire and the prime minister by the Empress Wilyan, not Rugan Second who abdicated the throne under the pretext of bad health.

'Who wrote that', from a highly reliable guess that would be....

15-43. New World

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<TLN: 'New World' here refers to something like https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_World >

Satou's here. When I saw the folk tale [Kikimimi Zuki] for the first time, I thought living a life while being monitored at every places seemed scary to me as a child. In modern time, there's surveillance cameras here and there, but I never thought that they were scary.



"--Fumu, as I thought, it was an act huh."

『Un, that seems about right.』

I'm near Tactician Touya's hideout, I've asked Dryad to get information from the moss growing there about the thing they said after I left.

I was bothered by how they only talked about some unusually convenient stuff for me, so I asked Dryad for help.

My suspicion was proven true sure enough, but I'd never thought that they noticed my Mana Camouflage.

『It seems there's no more children who heard them.』

Dryad sorted the accumulated information from vegetation networks, like moss and weeds, and then conveyed them to me.

Scientifically speaking, there's no way moss and weeds have the ability to store information.

"Thank you Dryad. It really helped."

『Ehehe, I got a lot and lot of magic power after all~』

I parted with Dryad who was waving her hands buzzingly, and I went to Saga Empire that was close to the hideout.

I've put a marker on the woman with plain face who seems to be the one who teleported Pochi, so next I'm heading to the empire to seize the Chief guy.

Even though it ultimately saved Lady Ringrande and Princess Maryest, I can't overlook the fact that they put Pochi in danger because of some pointless scheme.

Erase at once--not, as that's not to my liking, I'm thinking of presenting him with enough fear to make him think twice before trying to meddle with us ever again.

I'm sure that he will obediently listen if I let him taste dives from 10,000 feet high in flesh several times, as long as he doesn't have the ability to fly or teleport that is.

"There huh--"

At the top floor of a building I'm looking up to, there's a gnome man titled Saga Empire's Intelligence Bureau Chief.

--No.

This guy is not the same as the one earlier.

According to the AR reading, his race is [Dummy Puppet], though it's been cleverly hidden by a concealment-type artifact.

It looks exactly like the real person, but this guy is a fake.

I tried to trace back the magic power flowing from this guy, but all of them

are fakes and unconnected to the main body.

When I tried searching the map, I found one other [Dummy Puppet] in a rural area of Saga Empire.

I'll put a marker on it and prepare a trap that can trace the main body when he accesses the puppet.

"--Now then, what to do."

I'm sitting on top of one of the Saga Empire Imperial Palace's spires, muttering alone.

I can put Tactician Touya and the woman with plain face under [Geass] to prohibit them from getting hostile, but that'll be a bad move.

Even if I curb them, with the Chief still being on the loose, it will probably end up with them going into hiding and acting behind the scene.

Besides--.

I recall the conversation of Tactician Touya and his cohorts.

Adding that up with the information Dryad collected, it seems currently they're truly not going to pick a fight with us.

Maybe I should pretend that I've been successfully deceived?

For the time being, I'll give a warning to their public power, Saga Emperor and complete the preparation needed to seal the Seryuu City's Labyrinth Highway--that Hell Gate thing anytime I want.

Preparing Holy Monuments and the same laminated-type Purification Barrier that can be activated anytime in the whole earldom should be enough.

The Dragon Veins flowing near Seryuu City are very thick since they're connected to the Dragon's Valley, so it should be able to activate a slightly strong barrier without problem.

I gaze at the stone inside my hand while collecting my thoughts.

"Yup, even the Appraisal skill can identify this as a 『Lunar Stone』."

If the Chief doesn't ever access the Dummy Puppet, I'm thinking of using this thing as a bait to lure him out.

This is a stone I collected in the moon when I was taking a walk there while installing the space factory in the Lagrangian point halfway to the moon.

It seems they didn't want me to go to the moon, but it was just a dreary place with only grounds and rocks, nothing interesting.

I had tried searching the Map but there wasn't any temple or ruin where the Demon God could be sealed, nor demons and monsters.

According to the myth, the Demon God should be sealed on the moon, but it's most likely a deviated information.

Or perhaps, the Demon God has already broken off the seal and is secretly lurking in the world.

That possibility exists if the God that gives reincarnated people like Arisa their fragments is the Demon God.

Well, there's no use thinking more about it.

Arisa seems to be waiting in my room, so I decide to quickly give a warning to the emperor and finish the miscellaneous things.



--Master."

When I got back after finishing my business, Arisa was waiting in the pitch black office.

"Arisa, at least turn on the light while you're waiting."

"Welcome back. Were you at Aze's place?"

"Nah, I was just disciplining the troublesome guys who set Pochi up."

I told her that first while rebuking her.

At the Saga Emperor's room, I gave him a slight warning by imitating the Sword of Damocles myth.

I don't think he'll ever try to meddle with us again if he has a decent sense.

As for the matter about Chief, I'm going to talk about it with Arisa after she's recovered, Hikaru and Liza.

"As expected of Master. You're quick--"

She sounds meek unlike the usual Arisa.

--I have something I need to talk to Master about."

I was a bit surprised at the fact Arisa spoke of falteringly--her memory was sealed and sighting the descended God was the trigger--but the content itself was within the range of assumption I thought up after seeing the Weasel Emperor's state.

"The God who let Arisa reincarnated said that 『If you meet other Gods besides me, kill them』?"

"Un, that God said that they will attack anyone who's been given that God's power for sure if they find one, even though meeting one seldom ever happens."

That's strange.

I'm sure Gods have seen reincarnated people including Arisa for many times through the oracle Miko.

More importantly--.

"So the God who let you reincarnate was the 『Demon God』 after all?"

"I don't know. Judging from the circumstances, there's a high chance that's the case, but that God never directly said it."

That makes sense, from what she said earlier, her memory might have been sealed.

Would the trigger happen regardless of which Gods she encountered, or would it have to be God Zaikuon first, the discussion will change depending on that.

However, there's a high possibility that the Demon God who produces demons is sending reincarnated people to this world as the [Eggs] to mass produce demon lords.

I don't know why he didn't just embed the fragments in the people who live in this world though.

Good grief, the objective of Gods bringing forth reincarnated people is still unclear even now, it's depressing.

If we go by my deduction that has never been right with detective novels, it's "Reincarnated people will spread their knowledge, violate the God's Taboo, and then the Divine Punishment will befall them and the God who will nonchalantly appear will torment the reincarnated people who turn into demon lords" I guess?

--Nay.

It's full of holes if I think about it a bit more, and it's highly inefficient.

However, there's no mistake that the God who gave power to reincarnated people manipulates their will to forcefully make them fight the other Gods.

The proof is the fact that Arisa had absolutely no doubt about fighting Gods.

I have no intention of fighting Gods right now, but I have a feeling that I'd need to regard the God who sent the reincarnated people here as an adversary in the future.

If Arisa agrees to it, I'd even like to remove her God's Fragments.

"--By the way, have you seen your status after I healed you?"

"Un, I have."

Arisa answers with a serious tone.

"Don't forget to always equip the 『Thief God Harness』 when you're going out okay."

"Yes, dear."

I lightly whack Arisa's head.

"Owie."

She should be fine now if she can crack jokes.

After fighting God Zaikuon, Arisa has gotten several titles.

First, [Demon Lord] that I saw.

In addition, [One who Rebels], [One who Challenges God], for some reason [Hero], and--.

I look at Arisa's status displayed on the AR twice.
Looks like it's not a mistake after all.

Over there--[Satou's Familiar] has been added.



"Now then, what do you plan to do from now on?"

After putting Arisa to sleep, I meet face to face with the Great Weasel Demon Lord in the castle I made inside the desert sub-space.
The content of our talk is about the future of the Weasel Empire's people.

Since Miss Liedill is currently regenerating in the culture tank, I'm here only with the Great Weasel demon Lord and the Sword Demon Lord.
Two of the other demon lords have also survived, but since they've turned into complete war machines, I've binded them with [Geass] and imprisoned them in the [Abyss Dungeon] I made with space magic.

Eventually, I'm thinking of using Demon Lord Shizuka's [Familiarize] and [Transfer] to transfer the demon lords' [God's Fragments] to small animals and have Arisa and the other members defeat the resultant demon lords.

It seems Arisa will get [True Hero] title after all, and the other girls might even obtain hero title too.

"If Louise is still alive, she can delete the memories related to science from the people--"

"That's impossible. You understand right?"

This Louise that the Great Weasel Demon Lord mentioned is the catar-

kin reincarnated person who was in charge of deleting memory at Lete City.

Of course she's alive, but even if she's able to manage around 100 people, doing it to the whole population of Weasel Empire is impossible.

"However, letting them lead a life in the sub-space is no difference to what Gods are doing."

"You're right. Moreover, even if they can live for 100 years in the sub-space, it's not something that can be done forever."

The sub-space I created hastily using the forbidden spell should not last that long, although it might be a different story if it was reinforced by Yuika's Unique Skill like with the solitary island palace.

"And they'd probably be persecuted if they went back to the former world-
_"

--Rather, if the Seven Pillar Gods noticed them, they'd probably impose another Divine Punishment.

"In the first place, there's no way this world that has trouble to even sustain daily livelihood can accept immigrants."

I'm in consent with the Great Weasel Demon Lord.

Brighton City and Villages under my administration did accept a lot of immigrants, but that was only possible because I had arranged the environment with magic on top of the area being underpopulated. Moreover, the whole immigrants of the Weasel Empire are more than Shiga Kingdom's population.

The uninhabited city on the Ancient Dragon's Continent has also been ruled by many natives already, so it's not usable.

"I think I can take care of the food somehow at least."

"Umu, I'm thankful for that, however if they just keep living on like this, sooner or later they will violate the taboo, repeating the same thing."

The Great Weasel Demon Lord contemplates.

"Satou. Do you not desire this world?"

He really said some Great Demon Lord thing.

"Don't you mean half of the world?"

"I'm not talking about game."

<TLN: Dragon Quest 1's reference.>

I'm not sure how to respond if you're serious.

"With the power of that space magician girl called Arisa and you, we can kill Gods."

"Sorry, but I'm not going to fight Gods."

If we're talking about whether it's possible or not, I can do it myself even without forcing Arisa.

After all, I can cast the anti-god magic [Mythology Down] in no time at all, then I can just cut the God with the Divine Sword when they're weakened.

And I also can continuously shoot the [Mythology Down] as long as I have enough Magic Tanks.

"Why!"

The Great Weasel Demon Lord is exasperated.

"Though imperfect, the ones who gave birth to the creatures of this world are the Seven Pillar Gods."

"Where is the proof of that!"

"I've heard about it from the High Elves who have lived since the age of myth."

At least, I don't think that Aze-san and the other high elves are lying to me.

"Are you saying that it's okay to be abused if it's by your birth parents!"
"Your argument is reaching to the far extreme."

I might have agreed with the Great Weasel Demon Lord if we lived in the era where the Dog-head rampaged 20,000 year ago, but I don't feel the Gods' stance in the present time to be that malicious.

If the ones that manage this world are the Seven Pillar Gods, then I think the people of this world should obey the rules imposed by the administration.

As long as the rules (Gods) aren't doing some unreasonable exploitation that is.

"It is the nature of people to demand a better life. You think it's fine for them to suppress that idea!"

"Isn't it because they don't want people to kill each other like in WWII and Cold War?"

"You think those guys are such benevolent beings!"

U~n, for some reason the Great Weasel Demon Lord really hates Gods.

"Right. Since I've never met Gods, I can only make conjectures from various books--"

I look up at the Great Weasel Demon Lord and speak in sincerity to make my words reach him.

"--I'm not going to fight them based merely on those conjectures."

At the very least, even though the [Little Girl in Painting] was self-righteous, I didn't feel malice from her.

"Are you going to hold a conversation with them?"

"Yup, I'll be going to meet them."

"Are you serious?"

"Of course."

I gave an affirmation to the astonished-looking Great Weasel Demon Lord.

The markers I had put on God Zaikuon and the apostles came off immediately, but I was able to confirm that the markers were in the [God's Realm] for an instant.

Since the coordinates have been recorded and all, I don't think I shouldn't go.

Of course I'm only going once I've completely prepared and made an appointment with some friendly God though.

"Now then, since our stances stand on parallel lines, let's get back to the first topic."

Right now, deciding the future of the Weasel Empire's people comes first.

I'd like to give them hope for their future by the third day, I'm not talking about the [Rule of Three during Disaster] I heard somewhere before though.

Seriously spare me from having the people I saved getting suicidal.

"There is no place for them in the former world. The people of Weasel Empire don't want to let go of the convenience of technology. Is that correct?"

"That's right. The ignorant one would not care, however, ones who have

tasted the convenience will not be able to go back to their previous condition."

Un, I can understand.

I also want to take a bath every day and eat tasty things whenever I want.

"So here's a suggestion--"

The Great Weasel Demon Lord who listened to me in silence opens his mouth after I'm done.

"It might be possible if it's just one or two, but can it really be done with this number?"

"Yup, I've safely completed the empirical test. The mice I used in the test arrived there safely."

At first I was going to send Chuu Fat and the other mice who had amassed a massive influence under Shiga Kingdom in the test, but they were tied to Shiga Kingdom's hygiene improvement and crime control more than I could've imagined, so I used some normal lab rats instead.

"Then we will go with that suggestion--no, I should lower my head. Please lead us Weasel Empire's people to the new world."

When the Great Weasel Demon Lord entreated by lowering his head on the ground, the fox-faced Sword Demon Lord followed suit.

"Then, I'm counting on you to persuade the people in the sub-space okay."

"Understood. I vow that I will successfully persuade them before the Ark is completed."

I waved my hand at the Great Weasel Demon Lord and started the preparation for the Ark.

I have the materials and all, I should be able to complete it in half a month.

As I thought, working with my hands crafting something is really way more fun than some world's crisis or chasing some mysterious mastermind.

I'll leave that one until they're caught in the net themselves, right now let's continue the preparation to safely send the Weasel Empire's populace to the new world!

※Next update is planned for 2/12

15-44. New World (2)

*

Satou's here. I tend to handle things I got for free or got before I wanted it, roughly. I'm sure that things I obtained after much hardships must have this [Hardships Cost] added to it.



"Well then, I'm off."

"Un, take care okay."

After saying that to the girls, I teleported to the destination using Unit Arrangement.

"....It's cramped."

I open the hatch of the small pod I used to send the mice in and go outside.

I had used Astronout magic before I teleported, so I'll be okay regardless of the environment.

--A desolate world of death.

That was my first impression.

Ruins of crumbled high-rise buildings stretch out in the emptiness.

"Oh, I can still use Skills huh."

Even though the Skill Column is grayed out in my Menu, I still can produce Magic Edge on my finger.

However, using the Magic Edge felt slightly off than the usual.
Since the skill indication is grayed out, perhaps there's no added augment from Skills.

"....Magic power isn't recovering?"

The decreased magic power isn't recovering at all.
I'm not talking about my abnormal recovery rate, but the rate for common people.

Apparently, Magic Essence that's needed to recover Magic Power almost doesn't exist in this land.
This might also be the reason why the mini Gargoyle units I sent earlier as a scout ran out of magic power.

The Magic Column in the Menu is white like usual.

"Now then, how about All Map Exploration--"

My magic power got completely consumed, but it activated nonetheless.
It seems I can get information from this world through the Earth Vein even though there's no Dragon Vein.
In addition, even though it takes a long time to activate, [Appraisal] skill seems to be usable with times.

"The map's name is 『Ordinal M World Line, Planet Earth, Ruins of Japan Empire』 huh."

The word 'ruins' is like a proof that there is no one in this land.

--No. [There is nothing] is more correct.

After searching the whole map, let alone people, there's not even an animal larger than small ones.

I've secured several means to go back, but since my Menu functions normally, it's just excellent.

I tried going back to the [Solitary Island Palace] and went back here.

"Fumu, is it because the worlds are different--"

I put my hand on my chin and muttered.

It seems there was a slight load when I used Unit Arrangement to move between worlds.

I probably shouldn't use it too often between worlds.



I went around the earth using Sight-based Unit Arrangement, and confirmed that there's no one on the ground.

It appears nuclear fusion reactor was the mainstream instead of nuclear fission in this world, but there was a lot of glass craters on the ground and the terrains were considerably different from the earth I know.

World War 3-like nuclear wars probably happened.

"Just how rampant was the insanity in this world...."

Even several large-scale underground shelters were crushed by special bombs that could penetrate earth crust, I couldn't find any survivor.

When I moved to the place that should be Tokyo, snow was piled up like it was in glacier period.

"Survivor in the space is also, none huh."

A lot of debris was floating in the satellite orbit, the lunar base had also been annihilated.

"Traces of attacks by unknown aliens or hell's spawns, also none."

Humanity killing each other is within my assumption.

I give a silent prayer to the destroyed people of this world.

I had grasped about the destruction of this world and the state of electromagnetic waves from the mini gargoyle scout units beforehand, but I still wanted to confirm whether there was really no former inhabitant before we start the emigration.

I call forth a large warship loaded with numerous large-scale Sacred Tree Stone Furnaces from my Storage.

I resupplied my of magic power from those furnaces and picked one magic from the Magic Column.

--Terra Forming.

Rainbow colored light similar to my Spirit Light stretches to the sky, covering the planet like auroras.

With this, these ice age-like atmospheric temperature, lethal toxic substances and radiation should subside somehow.

"Next, I need to prepare the planned site of the settlement--"

The place is Kansai in Japan.

It's partly because it's near an inland sea which is a rich fishing ground, but also because I have limited options since Kanto and Tokai regions have been destroyed into huge craters.

While getting magic power supply, I created cities with multi-storied

buildings and 10 KM gaps in between, and covered them in a barrier that'd protect them from radiation and pollution.

The barrier will only hold up for around three months since there's no replenishment of magic power from outside, but during that time, the [Terra Forming] magic should finish purifying the outside world cleanly.

"In addition, I'll leave them water and preserved food."

I turned the land from around Kyoto to Lake Biwa into empty lot, and then I purified the frozen water in Lake Biwa, Lake Nara and Lake Osaka, making them drinkable.

In addition, I left enough preserved food to feed a population the size of a city for 10 years.

I think I put a bit too much, but since they're excess that was over-mass produced by the Chlorella factory, there's no problem.

"These should be about right eh? After this, I can just ask them if they need more once they've settled in--"

And since I'm planning to put a Sacred Tree Stone Furnace in the emigrant ship, it should be possible to use magic here for one year. I guess it could be 10 years if they economized?

After that, they should be able to make it themselves if I just leave a lot of solar panels.

--Ah perhaps.

Can't I just let them out here from the subspace without using the Ark?

I tried to do that, but it was not possible.

Apparently, the subspace I created belongs to that world, it can't be connected directly here.

Looks like this world isn't in that easy mode.

『Master, can you hear me?』

Arisa contacted me.

『Yeah, I could--』

--Huh?

Strange.

It shouldn't possible for space magic to reach here.

『How'd you do it, Arisa?』

『Telepathy thing?』

Arisa's tone sounded slightly triumphant.

『There's no way--』

When I was going to deny that, I understood that it was certainly something close to telepathy.

『Ehehe~ you noticed? It's exactly it, the [Familiar~]'s power!』

I hold myself back from retorting Arisa's weird intonation of [Familiar], I contemplate.

Right now I and Arisa can communicate with our will, the effect seems to be similar to [Telephone].

Apparently, there's a reason why [Satou's Faamiliar] was added on Arisa's title.

『Still, it's amazing how it enables us to talk between world.』

『Sure is, it's the power of our love.』

Well, leaving aside love, being able to communicate between worlds that even space magic can't do sure is convenient.

Moreover, just like my Unit Arrangement, it doesn't seem to consume magic power either.

This looks like it'll be useful when I'm visiting the God's Realm.

『--Ah, right, I forgot.』

Arisa said that and told me her primary business.
Apparently, the weasel emperor called me.

『Got it, tell him that I'll be back asap.』

『Hooi. Cup ramen as the souvenir, please!』

『Okay okay, leave it to me.』

To meet Arisa's request, I dropped in a bit on the way back to our world.



"Were you able to convince them?"

"There is no problem."

When I visited the castle in the desert subspace I made, the former great weasel demon lord--the current weasel emperor was having a lively meeting with the director of [Brains], and several other people.

There's someone wearing a robe too, looks like the weasel empire imperial court magician also came.

The director and other people who saw me begin to ask questions in a

rapid succession.

"I heard we're emigrating the people to another world."

"Is it true that it's Earth that's been destroyed by nuclear wars?"

"Did World War 3 really happen?"

"I'd rather go to Mars!"

--Calm down.

While being overwhelmed, I answered the questions of these [Brains] members.

The new world I suggested to them is the earth of a parallel world I visited earlier where no one is alive.

I found it by chance when I was randomly sending unmanned pods to see if I could find my original world.

"We're going to become Adam and Eve in the new world!"

Before I could even finish, a woman who was accompanying Brains's director said something similar to what Arisa would say.

I don't think it'll be that romantic since all the people of Weasel Empire are coming along too.

"However, can you teleport all the empire's people? Weasel Empire needed quite an amount of magic power to summon people from earth. We were barely able to maintain the gate for three minutes even when using catalysts."

I give a positive answer to the man wearing the weasel empire imperial court magician robe.

"It's fine. It will take some time, but the people will be going to that world using ships that cruise between dimensions."

As a matter of fact, transporting the Ark using my Unit Arrangement would have been the fastest, but if they were given a new land without any distress, they'd likely take it for granted, so I'm having them to take a slightly dangerous and troublesome way.

Of course, their safety is guaranteed enough.

"An emigrant ship that can go across worlds huh..... We'll make it in 100, no 30 years."

The director said some long-term idea.

"It'd be too pitiful for the people if they had to wait that long. I'll provide the shell, the main engine, and the life support system, so you guys just need prepare the interior."

The cruise will probably only take three months, three years at the longest, so the system doesn't need to be that tedious.

It'll probably take longer if the system is based on science instead of magic, but since it's going to have Sacred Tree Stone Engine anyway, there should be no problem in using magic tools.

"--Could it be, you had the people in mind from the very start."

"If you're letting all the empire's people migrate, just how long ago you had it planned."

....The emperor and the director seemed to have a misunderstanding.

Seeing them this happy, it's hard for me to say that I just thought it up yesterday.

Thus, the plan to emigrate the people of weasel empire to another world, [World Exodus] truly begins.



"You really made the travel possible in one month...."

"You can finish the interior during the cruise to kill time."

The weasel emperor sighed as he was overlooking several emigrant ships floating in the void sky-styled subspace.

He had the [God's Fragment] removed by Demon Lord Shizuka, and I turned him back to his original weasel emperor figure using Primeval Magic.

With his devotion, I was able to manage the Primeval Magic quite well to do it.

It seems to be extremely painful, so I'd better not casually use it on living people.

"Your Majesty! We've finished the preparation to depart."

Lady Liedill wearing a space suit arrived with a small void sky ship. She was a long-earkin girl who served as a Weasel Empire's Temple Knight, I had saved her when she was in critical condition from the Divine Punishment, and she regained a body close to her original one thanks to Bio Tank.

Lady Liedill jumped from the small void sky ship to the wharf where we were.

"Oops."

"Are you okay."

It seemed she was still not used to her new body, I caught her as she staggered and lost her balance.

I help her back on her feet while trying not to focus on the poyo-poyo sensation that hit my arm in accordance to inertia.

『You pervert.』

『I had no ulterior motive.』

I replied to Lady Liedill who complained through Telepathy similar to what Arisa did.

"Your Majesty, the preparation for ceremony has been completed."

"Umu, let's go."

I follow after him to the ceremony hall.

"Liedill, are you really not going to stay here?"

"Yes, Your Majesty. Even if this body has been altered by this guy, my loyalty lies with Your Majesty."

"Is that so--"

I take no notice to the conversation that has been repeated many times these past several weeks.

I don't know if it was because I poured Blood Elixir without restraint, or if it was because Lady Liedill lost the majority of her limbs, her title became [Satou's Familiar] once the treatment was complete.

We can communicate between worlds since she's my familiar, it's useful if there's trouble with the weasel emigrant fleet, so I leave it as is.

As a bonus--.

『This fat, it's a nuisance.』

『I think it's attractive.』

『Hmph.』

--Maybe because I had set the tank for Nana, her breasts volume increased to E cup from her super slender old self.

She said it like it was a problem, but it seems she's taken a liking to it so I didn't readjust it.

"Hear me my people! We are no longer able to set foot in this world whose gods loathe us. However--"

I take a look at the people standing in lines while taking no heed to the weasel emperor's speech.

There's not even one person with purple hair.

All of the reincarnated people received Unique Skill--or rather, [God's Fragment] as a compensation for reincarnating.

All of those fragments were transfered to small monsters by Demon Lord Shizuka, and then my companions defeated the demon lords that manifested.

Unfortunately, except for Arisa who got [True Hero] title like Pochi, no one got [Hero] title.

I also had the former demon lord who was training in the selbira labyrinth's lower layer, Shin boy to defeat them, but unfortunately his ability wasn't even enough to give a finishing blow to a weakened demon lord so he wasn't able to get [True Hero] title.

--Give an applause of gratitude to Hero Nanashi! This emigrant fleet wouldn't have been possible without him!"

While enduring the earsplitting waves of sound, I wave my hand at the people elegantly like a member of Imperial Household.

"Then, let us depart!"

After the weasel emperor declared that, the people who were standing in lines began to move to the cockpits of the emigrant fleet.

"Satou. Please take care of my little brother and the weasel people who stay in this world."

Even though I couldn't imagine that Weasel Empire's prince wanting my help, I replied him with a short, "I got it."

『Your Majesty, this is a farewell degozaru.』

『Umu, serve under Satou and become his shield from now on.』

『Acknowledged degozaru.』

The former sword demon lord who's staying here regrettably parted with the weasel emperor.

There were also around 200 other people who declined the emigration, but I had already sent them to various places in the world separately. These settlers' memories about science were erased by the catear-kin reincarnated person, Louise, who was in charge of memory deletion in Lete City, so they shouldn't become a target of a new Divine Punishment or something.

"Wait~?"

"Emperor person, please wait nodesu!"

Tama and Pochi ran up while holding a necklace-like thing.

"Dog Hero Pochi and Cat Ninja Tama. I see that you two are lively today too, excellent."

The weasel emperor looks like a friendly old man as he smiles with his

whole face.

"Safety prayer~"

"We made 『Sekka Flower』's necklace to protect you in your journey nodesu."

It's the same necklace Pochi and the others got from the little girl Yuni when we departed Seryuu City back then.

For these two, this [Sekka Flower] Necklace must be the very symbol of safe journey.

"Umu, I will cherish it."

"Aye!"

"Yes nanodesu."

I left the emigrant fleet with a small void sky ship along with Pochi and Tama who were waving their hands buzzingly.

"Ga~te?"

"Open nanodesu!"

It's an Otherworld Gate I remodeled from Saga Empire's Hero Summoning and Weasel Empire's Japanese Summoning magic circles.

A dark gray subspace can be seen on the other side of the multi layered magic circles.

One ship after another enter that subspace.

"They're gone~"

"Emperor person will be alright for sure nanodesu."

"That's right. I'm sure he can accomplish it."

The preparation was excessively enough after all.

After confirming that the gate had closed, I teleported back to the Solitary Island Palace.

I'd like to relax with my companions before visiting the God's Country.

"Meat meat meat~ ham~ burg~?"

"Bird-san, goat-san, beef-san, lots of them, but I love them all~ nanodesu."

I'm walking in the alley toward Solitary Island Palace where flowers are blooming while listening to Tama's and Pochi's lunch song.

Peaceful daily life really is the best isn't it.

※ Next update is planned for 2/19

15-Intermission 1: Hayato Masaki

*

※ This is from Hero Hayato's point of view

"Looks like there's a time limit for God Parion to connect worlds. I have to go soon."

Gentle light falls from the heaven, wrapping me.

My body floats in the air and my view is swallowed by the light while my friends and Satou are watching.

I could dimly hear Rin's sorrowful voices calling me.

--Sorry, Rin.

I apologize to my friends in my mind.

『My gratitude, Hero.』

I heard a voice mixed with noise, like a badly tuned radio, inside my mind.
This cute childish voice is of God Parion.

She conveys her thought with flowing images.

Looks like she's thanking me for subjugating the demon lord.
I regret that I can't see the young goddess inside the whitened view.

『Parting, Apologize.』

--Don't worry about it. I'm the one who chose to do it.

I shook my head at God Parion's apologetic thought.

『Great Happiness, Future, Blessing.』

--Yeah, I'll find so much happiness so that Rin and the others I left behind won't have to worry.

Hearing me, the young goddess sent a smiling image at me.
That's right, children gotta have to smile!



"This place is--"

I was standing on a stone pavement when I noticed.

--The precincts of a shrine?

Right! I was in this shrine when I got summoned.

"So I've come back...."

I run down the stairs.

I passed through a vermilion arc gate, arriving at a gray road that smelled of exhaust fumes.

"Kya"

I heard a girl's voice on the side.

Looks like she was surprised because I rushed in.

"My bad--Tachibana!"

--Eh? Masaki-kun?"

I found my childhood friend with her loli face--Tachibana Yumiri and I immediately hugged her slender childish body.

"No, w-wait, Hayato-chan! Please do this at a more romantic spot."

When I heard my panicking childhood friend's voice, I couldn't hold back my nostalgia and ended up weeping.

"What? Are you hurt anywhere? Heey, Hayato-chan."

"Yumiri Yumiri, I'm back. I've come back."

Yumiri gently hugged this unseemly me back even while being at a loss.



"Here you go, Pekari. You like it right."

"T-thank you. Ah to think I could drink Pekari again--"

Yumiri offered a handkerchief as I got in tears again when I saw the sport drink she gave.

I feel that Yumiri's cheeks look red, maybe because of the hug earlier.

"--Huh?"

"What is it now."

Yumiri frowns quizzically.

"Why are you in sailor uniform?"

From what I remember, this guy doesn't have a cosplaying hobby.

"You're really! We were together at the school earlier."

--Earlier?

I stare at Yumiri's eyes.

"W-what."

Yumiri crosses her arms in front of her body, taking a guarding pose. She was shaken enough that she began to act strangely, but I only noticed that after I got home.

There was something more important for me at this time.

"What year and date are now!"

"He?"

I caught the puzzled Yumiri's shoulders and asked.

"Tell me!"

"U-un.... It's the third of March 2013, the time too? It's 12:15."

I don't remember the time, but there's no mistake about the date.

This was the day I got summoned.

"I thought Time magic didn't exist...."

"Hey, didn't you say that you'd graduated from chuunibyou in your middle school days? Did it recur again?"

Yumiri who heard my muttering said something, but I couldn't afford to mind that as I touch my face all around.

"Are you really alright?"

"Mirror! Do you have a mirror?"

"I do though?"

I look at the mirror Yumiri handed to me worryingly.

--It's the high schooler me.

"Huh? Come to think of it, why are you wearing a suit? Interview for a part-time job?"

"It's a long story--"

I talked to Yumiri about the other world while feeling pleasant with the surprise from the young goddess.

At first Yumiri didn't believe me at all, but she consented after I crushed a coin into four parts with my fingers.

My strength had been badly lowered compared to when I was another world's hero since I couldn't use my skill here, but there was still enough unreasonable strength remaining for me to do that.

I feel that I probably could join into the circle of top athletes if I just trained a bit.

"Hmm, you went through a lot. And, did you leave lovers or wives in the other world?"

Her words were light.

Looks like she didn't completely believe it.

Well, whatever.

I also would have laughed someone if they told me something like this.

"Nah, I didn't have any lover nor wife--"

--The one that's always been in my mind.

Yumiri blushed as I stared her.

Let's not talk about Princess Arisa.

"Sorry, Yumiri, I have to go home and say 『I'm home』 to my little sister."

When I said that with an earnest look, Yumiri's shoulders dropped down a bit for some reason, but then she waved her hand and said, "Bye bye" while looking astonished.

"Un, see you tomorrow."

My cheeks loosened from Yumiri's farewell.

"Yea, see you."

"Bye~"

Yumiri looked satisfied when I replied her.



"Ichirou-nii's friend?"

A beautiful woman who feels similar to Satou is looking at me suspiciously.

"Yes, I'm here to deliver a letter he's entrusted to me."

"How old are you?"

"Tw--seventeen."

I almost said my age when I was in the other world.

"Then you knew Ichi-nii when you were seven?"

--What does she mean?

"No, it was two years ago."

Her expression disappeared from her face when I said that.

"Really--"

The beauty whose expression changed into that of a noh mask said, "Go home", and turned back into the entranceway.

"P-please wait. At least please take letter."

"If you want to prank someone, do it somewhere else--"

She said that with a cold voice, and then she slammed the entranceway's door right before my face.

"Oh my? Do you need something here?"

When I turned back at the voice behind, there was a middle aged woman who looked similar to Satou, holding a shopping bag.

"Are you Suzuki Ichirou's mother?"

"Yes, I am?"

After introducing myself, I told her the same thing I said earlier.

"Don't you know that our son went missing 10 years ago?"

"10 years ago? He left me a business card though--"

I hold out a business card that Satou gave me.

"I think you're mistaking him with someone else. That child went missing when he was attending an university. He shouldn't be working anywhere."

I recalled, the words "The world might be different" that Satou said when I listened to her.

After apologizing to her for the clamor, I left the Suzuki house.



"Hayato-nii, what a' you doin'?"

My little sister Aika who had just turned three talked to me clumsily.

"I'm making a doghouse."

"Do'! Keep do'?"

Aika gleefully asked while climbing my back.

She's adorable today too.

Truly an angel.

"Right. We should keep one."

"Waai"

Aika happily jumps up and down.

I quickly supported Aika as she was about to fall from my back and lowered her on the ground.

"Ride on do' back!"

"I see I see. Then we gotta keep a big dog."

"Aye!"

Looks like my image library will get additional pics of my pretty little sister riding on a dog's back.

Aika was watching me making the doghouse for a while, but then she dozed off halfway through so I let her sleep in the sofa.

"--Alright, complete."

Lastly, I nailed a nameplate written with word, Satou, on the doghouse. I got this nameplate from the [Satou] of that world.

I clap my hand to brush off wood chips and dust.

"Still, asking me to build this hut, I don't understand Satou's request at all."

I muttered while stretching once.

"Hayato-chan, are you inside?"

I heard my childhood friend Yumiri's voice from the entranceway.

After our reunion recently, she came to call me "Hayato-chan" like she used before, instead of "Masaki-kun."

I got thoroughly made fun of in the school, but since it somehow felt like I regained my lost youth, I gladly enjoyed it and then it waned before I knew it.

"I'm here!"

I called Yumiri from the garden, thinking of bragging the doghouse to her.

At that time, a presence appeared behind me.

"Hello, Hayato-sama. It's been awhile."

I turned back and saw a man who looked like he was just before his thirty coming out of the doghouse.

"Don't tell me, you're Satou?"

"Yes, it's been a while isn't it."

It's my friend with the same atmosphere, but aged.

I don't know how he crossed worlds, but Satou could probably do it indiscreetly.

"Thank you for coming. I'm happy to see you again."

"Yes, me too."

It's only been several months for me, but it's probably around 10 years for Satou.

"Satou, what happened to that world--"

I asked my friend's business while exchanging reunion hugs with him.



"Ha-Hayato-chan? Onee-san thinks BL is bad for you!"

Yumiri who saw us exchanging reunion hugs said some preposterous remark.

"Would you happen to be Hayato-san's elder sister?"

"N-no, I'm Tachibana Yumiri, Masaki-kun's childhood friend and classmate."

Satou shrewdly talked to Yumiri.

He murmured, "Tachibana" when she heard Yumiri's name.

"Sometimes ago, Hayato-san really helped me when he picked up a briefcase with a large sum of money in it."

"Briefcase?"

"Yes, that's right. If I couldn't find that briefcase--"

Looks like Satou is fit to be a first-rate fraud.

Yumiri who got deceived in the blink of an eye said, "It's nothing important, I'll talk to you at school tomorrow", and went home.

"I'm glad we cleared the misunderstanding."

"You bet yea."

I ask Satou again while sighing in relief.

"And, did something happen to that world?"

--I won't spare anything if my power is needed.

"Arisa asked me for something."

"My honey--sorry."

Oops, it should be about time for her to become Satou's wife and have children.

"No, you're free to call her what you like."

Satou is all smiles like usual.

For some reason, he's drinking the cheap instant coffee with great relish.

"And, what do you need? Ask me anything if it's something I can help."

"Then, could you guide me to the drugstore or supermarket nearby?"

--Drugstore?

"Arisa said that she wanted to eat instant food, thus I'm here to buy various kinds."

--Haa?

This was the time when my jaw dropped.

Who would have guessed that he was teleportating between worlds, which even gods couldn't do, just to buy instant food!

"You never change...."

While sighing, I lead my friend to the city in order to fulfill his wish.

"You even had a driver's license."

"Yes, I couldn't exchange that thing with money if I didn't have an ID card."

Satou got his fund by selling a mysterious object made of gold in a precious metal purchasing shop.

After the exchange, we went into a back alley and his appearance changed to the 15 year old Satou I'm familiar with.

"The effect of illusion magic is truly short in this world isn't it."

Apparently, it's not that 15 years have passed in that world, he just had it prepared to match his appearance on the driver's license.

After buying several boxes of instant foods, Satou went back to the other world satisfyingly.

Afterward, he occasionally came to visit once every several months.

I was surprised when brought along Rin who looked and got younger, but right now she's got along well with Yumiri and Aika.
Satou prepared her family register in this world.
His cheat performance is really dependable like always.

"Satou, how is the world there?"

"Yes, it's really peaceful like this world."

I asked Satou while watching him playing with my little sister in the garden.

"Hey, did you do something to that?"

The TV was full of news about wars and disasters when I got back to this world, but they decreased every time Satou came visiting.

Satou only smiled and laughed without answering me back.

Geez, looks like Satou is Satou no matter the world.

※ The next update is planned for 2/26.

※ The part after ◆ might change depending on the development of the main story

15-Intermission 2. At the Eastern End of the Continent (1)

*

※ This isn't from Satou's POV

"....Furry mountain?"

I muttered as I saw a small mountain of fur in my dim view.

--Thud.

A warm lump touched my body.

When I look down, I see a creature resembling a newborn rat. It might be cute if it were small, but it's as frighteningly big as an adult man.

I almost reflexively jumped out, but I couldn't put any power in my limbs, I was only able to bend backward.

"●●●"

I heard gibberish words from the small mountain.

Apparently the owner of that fur is alive. I wonder if I've been carried here to be his food--.

Right when I thought of that, I noticed.

"So this is reincarnation..."

I had never thought that I would be thrust down in the animal realm.

I couldn't fight against the rapid drowsiness of my body as I fell asleep just like that.

And then I recall my shitty past in my dream--.



"Mom, I'm hungry."

"I'm sorry, we have no money, so get some meal from our neighbor okay."

"Eeh, again?"

Hearing my mom's and elder sister's conversation in the corridor, I realized that mom had offered all the food to [God].

Since dad disappeared with a young girl, mom was always absorbed into [God].

"Tarou, let's go."

"Un."

Together with my elder sister, we went to the neighboring diner.

Of course nowadays there's no one kind enough to feed us free of charge.

We were finally able to eat after I washed plates while enduring the cold water while my sister acted like a waitress.

It was not that good, but I didn't care as long as it made me full.

One day my sister ran away from home after she graduated middle school. I was always a baggage of my sister....

I survived somehow while enduring hunger.

I'm sure I would've long been dead if there was no lunch service in my

middle school.

After graduating middle school, I was picked up by a small factory in the town, I left my mother who offered everything to god as I began to live alone.

The wage is low, but I was satisfied with living a life where I could have meals three times a day.

Cause I wanted to be apart from my mother who raised queer cry at night and endlessly repeated her god's teaching, no matter what.

After living alone, I noticed that my heart had also started to fall ill.

After some time, when I (boku) started to call myself with ore (I), I met an unexpected person.

"Is that you Tarou?"

"Dad?"

The dad that I hadn't met for more 10 years was wearing priest-like clothes.

"What are you doing now?"

"I'm an instructor of the Eastern Joy School."

--Ha?

Don't tell me that even dad had been influenced by some good-for-nothing cult?

"Tarou, won't you go with me?"

"I'm not interested in cult."

I shook off the arm of my father who started to be delirious and spat out.

--I don't wanna have anything to do with cult and god!

"This is different! Don't group up the Eastern Joy School with the average cult! This is a school dedicated to finding happiness for people!"

That's the same thing, dad.

"You have a job right? Would you like to join the Eastern Joy School?"

My dad said that after seeing my factory uniform.

His eyes, mixed with flattery and contempt, were unpleasant.

"I've no interest."

"Then why don't you try investing in the school's benefit society? 100,000 no, just 10,000 yen is fine! This month's quota is tight you see. Please."

I felt sick looking at my father acting like the model of shamelessness. I lightly pushed him aside and ran away.

Even though I noticed that the pay envelope in my pocket fell, I ran through the alley without stopping.

I almost vomited hearing my father saying, "Thanks, Tarou" behind.

"God can go die!"

I frantically shouted out the sordid feeling overflowing in my heart. I felt like I'd get swallowed by that sordid feeling if I didn't do that.

I kept running while staring at the sky.

"Oy! Look out!"

Before I could see who said that, I heard a high-pitched noise of a brake,

and got hit by an impact, my sight was wrapped in darkness.
Truck guy, sorry for jumping in front of ya....



"....God?"

I faced a self-proclaimed god in a purple space.

The self-proclaimed god told me that they'd reincarnate me to another world.

Moreover, they'd give me a special power that only I could use called Unique Skills.

--Too suspicious.

"I don't have money."

The self-proclaimed god replied with something with 'denial' and 'unnecessary' as the points.

Apparently, it's hard to communicate with this guy.

It feels like having a conversation between extreme ends in the factory.

"Like I said, I don't need no power! More importantly, let me hit you."

I don't mind if my soul is erased here if I could hit god who had wrecked my life.

And then a purple sphere emerged in front of me.

I didn't know if that was a god or not, but I hit it with all my might while thinking of my shitty father and cult mother.

It felt like hitting a water surface and then my right arm got sunk into the sphere until my shoulder.

"Uwaa"

I pulled my arm in panic, but two lights were coiling about around it.

"Chose? Chose what?"

I asked the self-proclaimed god, but the other party didn't reply, instead an image got unilaterally transmitted to me.

"Gods? There's other gods? Hit them all I want if I meet them?"

I tried to grasp the purple lights and then I felt my body got filled with power.

It seems I acquired two power, [Lucky Star] and [<<Reflect Unlucky>>].

"If this power allow me to hit gods, then I'll accept it."

I grinned at the image transmitted by the self-proclaimed god.

"I'll beat you the last as a thank."

The self-proclaimed god replied like it was nothing, annoying me.

"You're looking forward to it? I'll make you eat those words someday."

I was melting inside the purple darkness as I heard the laughter of the self-proclaimed god who heard my declaration of war.



"Sheesh, is this primitive age...."

I muttered while looking at the people living in pit-dwellings.

I thought I was dropped into the animal realm when I just got reincarnated, but it turned out that I'd just been reincarnated as one of beastkin races, the weaselkin.

My father in this life seems to be the patriarch of this poor hunting community at the eastern end.

After losing to the powerful tigerkin and lizardkin, we were driven away to the barren land near the coast which had few prey, a lot of people died of starvation during winter.

I wanted to discard this unstable hunting lifestyle and pressed forward with agriculture, but the land here is really bad it's impossible.

It seemed my father tried to procure sea products, but he gave up after 30% of our tribe were eaten by the monsters living in the sea.

I spent many days without food, but strangely enough, there were many times where I got food myself before I died of starvation.

Gods and cults are still my enemy even now, but I don't mind thanking that self-proclaimed god for the [Lucky Star] I got.

"Ani-cha"

"Ou, are you alright going out today?"

"Aye!"

I support my youngest weak little sister walking.

I dunno if it's because my father is fertile or if it's just the tribe thing, but I have a lot of siblings in this life.

"You look like a princess today."

She usually wore some dirty crude clothing, but today she's wearing something that looks like a traditional costume.

"Ehehee, it's a ritual."

"Ritual? Ritual huh--"

I felt a foreboding at the [Ritual] my little sister told me.

And that foreboding became real immediately.

"S-STOOOOOOOOOP!"

"Tarou, don't obstruct the ritual!"

"Yes! That good-for-nothing sick is finally good for something."

My father and my eldest brother sneered at me for trying to stop them. Even though I tried to forcibly shake them off, this child's body couldn't make it happen.

I could hear shrill laughter of my little sister.

"Look, she's having fun right."

"That happy medicine is exclusive for the offering after all."

"That's just a drug!"

The moment I snapped, my little sister's laughter stopped, and I heard shouts of joy from the tribe people overlooking the ritual.

My heart froze looking at the lump of flesh that was my little sister.

"You should thank her. If he didn't become the god's sacrifice, the corpse over there would have been you, the 『Taboo Child』, instead--"

My eldest brother told me that while laughing repulsively.

--You sure are lucky."

Hearing that, I lost control of myself and hit my eldest brother while screaming.

Of course, a seven year old like me couldn't possibly win against my eldest brother, I laid on the ground after getting beat up.

--I want power.

Not the vague lucky power I got from the self-proclaimed god, but a power to have my way with....



"Nii-san, I should go with you after all."

"Al, there's no need for you to pull the short end of the stick too y'know?"

The brightest one among my siblings, Alrusuri came before me in traveling clothes.

My eldest brother drove me out of the tribe once he took over as the patriarch, perhaps it was because he didn't like me kept pressing the agriculture.

"They say you're going abroad to study about agriculture but--"

"I know."

--In reality, it's an exile.

"Besides, my dream is the same as Nii-san's, that is having agriculture as our tribe's mean of survival."

"I see."

I left the familiar pit dwelling village with Al and two guards.
A tinge of loneliness recurred in my chest when I could not see the village anymore.

Looks like I'm attached to it even though it's a poor village.

"Where are we going?"

"I heard from father who went traveling in the past--"

We know little about outside world as there's no peddler who comes to our village.

According to father, our race is a nomadic people who peddle around the world.

It seems there's extremely few who settle down like this village.

"If tigerkin or lizardkin people found us, we'd probably be killed or become slaves. So we need to head toward the humankind country while avoiding their regions."

According to father who was once a traveler, we should be able to reach either Rumooku Kingdom or Doraoku Kingdom.

We hid ourselves from huge monsters and tigerkin's assaults, ran away with all our might from the slow lizardkin, and finally arrived at a human settlement with our emaciated bodies.

While feeling nostalgic at humans living at the village, I was thrust before the reality; beastfolks like us are persecuted.

We helped the farmwork in that village while getting treated like slaves as we learned their language.

It was the long-awaited agriculture, but the things the village was doing was just a primitive farmwork where they plowed, randomly sowed seeds,

and scattered fertilizers without even ridging the field.

We ran away from the village once we learned how to talk imperfectly, heading toward the western big kingdom, Shiga Kingdom.



"Nii-san, there's a village."

"Yeah, the field looks splendid."

Going out of our way to Shiga Kingdom looks to be the correct choice. We rode our horses to Puta Town along the highway since the field belonged exclusively to villages.

"Young master, the town seems strange."

"Yea, it seems you're right."

The guards didn't need to stop us.

We could hear tumult from the people inside the town.

There must be trouble.

"Let's avoid this town and go to the next one."

I turned the horse around as I said that.

"Nii-san, that!"

Hearing my little brother, I turned back and saw a foxkin girl with purple fur who tumbled out of the town gate.

And she's bloody all over....

"Nii-san!"

I heard my little brother's worried voice far in the back.
Apparently, I'd run the horse without thinking of the consequences.

"Gimme your hand!"

『Ui? Mofumofu?』

--Japanese language?

I pick up the young foxkin girl, passing through the townspeople who carry crude weapons such as farm tools.

"There's more of those cursed beasts!"

"Kill the No Life King's kin!"

Ignoring the mob-like townspeople's shouts, I run the horse.

"Nii-san, they're chasing us."

Three armed men are pursuing us.

"Young master, please leave this to us."

"No you can't. I'd rather dump this girl than you guys."

The body of the young foxkin girl on the back seat stiffened hearing me rejecting the guards' reckless suggestion.

"Nii-san!"

I turned my line of sight back to the front at my little brother's shout, a ratkin riding a six-legged boar jumped out of the forest.

"I ask! Are you criminals?!"

"We're not, we just saved a girl who was about to be killed by adventurers."
"Understood. With justice in hands, Warrior Mize of Ash Ratkin will assist you!"

That ratkin was strong.
To think a level 30 warrior was this strong!

Warrior Mize defeated the pursuers in no time at all and we got out of the trouble.



"Thank you. I'm Tarou of weaselkin. I came to Shiga Kingdom to learn about agriculture."

"Hou? That's unusual for a beastkin."

Warrior Mize was surprised after my introduction, and then he folded his arms while looking a bit troubled.

"Is it that unusual?"

"Sorry, it's not about that."

I urge the hesitant Warrior Mize to continue.

"Presently, Shiga Kingdom is in a dangerous state due to the murder of a noble by the 『No Life King』."

The town earlier certainly looked strange.

"Umu, and?"

"That 『No Life King』 is a Cursed Child--In other world, he has the same purple fur as you and that girl over there."

"In other words, we cannot enter Shiga Kingdom?"

I exchanged looks of loss with my little brothers and the guards at the outrageous situation.

We must have looked really pitiful.

"This must be fate. If it's fine with you, would you like to go with me?"

Warrior Mize told us that.

We don't really mind as long as we can learn about agriculture--.

"To where?"

"Elf Village, Boruenan Forest."

Thus, our destination changed from Shiga Kingdom to Boruenan Forest.

※ Next update is planned for 3/5

New chapters will come rushing in from 3/12!

15-Intermission 3. At the Eastern End of the Continent (2)

*

"Niisan, what do you think that white thread is?"

One day when we got close to the black dragon mountain range, my little brother said that.

"Where?"

"Look, it's between the peaks over there."

It must be very thin.

Unfortunately, I can't see it with my eyesight.

I could only make out silhouettes of countless wyverns flying near the summits.

"That's the world tree."

"That?"

My brother and the guards were dumbfounded since they didn't understand the term [World Tree], but I knew the name from the title of a game I played in my previous life.

Even though it was a used game I bought for 100 yen in a bargain sale, I remember playing it for around a year.

The fox girl died young in her previous life so she doesn't have that kind of memories.

Now then, putting that aside--.

"Mize, I know you're telling us to cross that mountain range, but shouldn't

we prepare some countermeasure for the wyverns?"

"Everything's fine. They will be driven away by the master of the mountains. That's why I've brought those with me."

The ratkin warrior Mize glanced at the 10 goats tied to the horse.

"Niisan!"

I turned around at my brother's warning, and then a black shadow appeared in front of us.

The thing that appeared while being accompanied by several tornado and shaking that equaled earthquakes was a monster that makes the kaijuus in monster films looks cute in comparison.

『Dragon?』

The taciturn fox girl is looking up in rapture.

Unlike us who couldn't even move an inch, apparently this girl is very daring.

"It is an honor to meet you black dragon-dono!"

Warrior Mize talked to the black dragon while still on his horse.

His voice is shaking.

He's probably afraid of the black dragon too.

"We have prepared these goats for black dragon-dono's tribute! Please have them!"

The black dragon seemed to understand Mize, after roaring once frighteningly, it began to catch the goats with its huge hands and greedily devour them.

The sounds of the goats screaming and the crunching sounds of the bones

made me hallucinate my own future.

The black dragon finished eating the goats in a flash, and then it looked at Mize as if it was urging something.

"We're very glad to see that you like it. We have a business to do at the other side of the mountain range. We would like a permission to cross over black dragon-dono's territory."

——RWULOOOUUUUNN !

The black dragon shot a flash after replying Mize.

A black ditch of several kilometer long was carved on the mountains, raising white steam.

"Dragon Breath...."

To think the otherworld dragon was such an out-of-ordinary being....

——RWULOOOUUUUNN !

The black dragon flew to the horizon after roaring once.

Guided by Mize, we crossed the mountain range through the warmth black road, arriving at Boruenan Forest.

We did not get attacked by monsters even once during our trip in the black dragon mountain that was said to be perilous.



"Purple fur is it degozaru...."

We met an elf who was speaking with [Gozaru] as we arrived right before the barrier of Boruenan Forest.

"The ratkin over there can go inside the village since you have a letter of introduction from Yuya, but the weasels and the fox people cannot."

After the gozaru elf said that, another elf behind him muttered weakly, "If only the matter with Touya didn't...."

"Elf-dono, we would like to learn about agriculture. Would you please allow my little brothers and the guards to enter?"

"Niisan!"

If the problem is with the purple fur, then it should be okay if I and this fox girl just not go with them.

Fortunately, there's a lot of wild beasts at the foot of the black dragon mountains.

I should be able to live alone until they've finished their study.

"What should we do degozaru?"

"--All right."

At the gozaru elf's question, the elf behind him contemplated with folded arms and then he nodded.

"If you want to learn about agriculture, I'll introduce you to the gnomes of Borueswen. Our agriculture cannot be replicated by anyone but elves. Although gnomes use earth magic for it, it should be similar enough to general agriculture."

Thus, we will be staying at Borueswen with the elf's introduction, while warrior Mize will be training in combat at the Leprechaun's training site.

『Ui fight too.』

The fox girl who had learned the basic of swords from Mize during our trip went with Mize to the Leprechaun's training site.

Thus we spent three years, and obtained useful skills like Compounding and Alchemy besides Agriculture.

It was thanks to the skill points I saved up during our journey.

We could have led a comfortable life with a permanent residence at Borueswen, but even though it was a wasteland, that place is my second birthplace.

Above all, my little brother wants to go back to our homeland.

I don't want to part with my little brother after he's kept me company this far.

We bid the gnomes who took care of us farewell and went toward the Leprechaun's training site to say goodbye to Mize and the fox girl.



"Master!"

"I-is that you?"

The fox girl who had grown rapidly in just three years appeared.

--In a macho way that is.

"You look like you can even hit a bear to death."

"Ui, cut that once."

Since the fox girl leveled up from 1 to 12, she can seemingly kill a normal

bear easily now.

She's swinging a heavy looking bronze great sword buzzingly.

"You've really worked hard."

"Ui, worked hard!"

The fox girl who's purring like a cat looks heartwarming befitting of her age.

"Is that you Tarou-dono, is your farmwork going well?"

Warrior Mize showed up.

His level only increased by one, but the aura around him looks sharper than before.

"Yeah, my master has given me a permission to go independence."

They've shared us resilient seeds and seeds suitable for our homeland's climate, we just need to raise them next.

"Is that right. I will pray to the god of this land for the development of Tarou-dono's homeland."

My face was going to reflexively warp at Mize's words, but I can't show such a rude behavior in front of our benefactor, so I endure it.

"No need for prayer--Mize-dono's words are quite enough."

I overwrote the true intention I spoke out with good words.

"Master, where are you going?"

"Ah, back to my village."

"Ui will go too! Help, master's trip!"

I had never been yearned so defenselessly like this so I inadvertently

nodded at the fox girl.

"Stay safe."

"You too Mize-dono, be in good health--"

We parted ways with our benefactor and went straight to our homeland.

There were times when we got chased by people who saw my and the fox girl's purple fur, but we were somehow able to safely reach the familiar-looking wasteland.



"Niisan, the village!"

"Let's hurry!"

We arrived at our homeland after four years, it's become a ruin of burned buildings.

"Looks like the lizards invaded."

Those rotten arms under the ruin must be of the brown scaled lizardkin.

"Master, something smelly over there."

While having a bad feeling about this, I quietly walked toward the place the fox girl pointed at.

"Ni-Niisan."

"Yeah, those damn lizards...."

The bodies of weaselkin women and children have been thrown inside a

deep hole.

"WOooooooooooooooooo"

"GAIE, ZOIOAAAAAAAAAAAA! Damned lizards, I'll kill every last one of them with these hands."

The two guards wailed, it seems they caught sights of people they knew among the bodies.

"Niisan, those are."

"Yeah, it's father and brother."

Father's and eldest brother's heads are decorated inside a small hole at the edge of the big hole.

I don't know the type, but this small shrine is something to worship a god. I saw something like it in human villages during our trip.

"Serves them right."

I was planning to scrape off the patriarch's social status with my own hand as a revenge for my little sister, I'd never thought that the lizards would get to it first.

"Young master, it seems the lizards are going to attack the lionkin settlement nearby while taking our brethren along."

"Then these were sacrifices for their victory in war huh...."

My little brother who heard the guard is looking at the bodies of our brethren with a pained look.

"--Should we go help them?"

I said that after a careful calculation.

I actually was fully intending to abandon them, but if I chose that here, I would likely lose not only my brother but the two reliable guards. Besides, we'd need manpower to create a new agriculture-based village.

"That's a suicidal act deesu."

"Who's there!"

A man wearing yellow overcoat suddenly appeared behind us even though there wasn't any presence before.

His skin is dark brown, nearly ocher-colored, but his face is unmistakably that of a human.

I use [Status Check] which I don't use often since it's tiring, to check the man's info.

--Demon?

This is the first time I saw this race.

It might sounds nefarious but most races in this world are terrible anyway, so there's probably not much difference.

"I'm just a passing by nice demon desu."

"D-demon?!"

The guards and my little brother seem to know about it.

"If you answer my question, I can compensate you with your wish desu."

"Are you saying that you can fulfill the compensation even if I tell you to exterminate the lizardkin?"

"Killing all the lizardkin in this world would require too much efforts desune. I can help if it's just annihilating the lizardkin who attacked this village and is at war with the lionkin deesu."

--Alright.

"Pay it in advance. I'll answer anything you want after we've confirmed it."

I don't care even if the demon is the same devil from my knowledge.

"Okay deesu. If you don't, I'll be having all your lives for it desuyo?"

"Yea."

I'll sell even my soul.

"Nice resolve you have there desu."

The next moment after a mysterious roar reached my ears, our bodies are already flying in the air.

"Uwaa"

"I'm not good with wind magic, you'll fall if you struggle desuyo?"

Despite being not good with it, he could fly up this many people in an instant, astounding.

Even among gnomes, there wasn't any who could use magic this well.

"Before that, I'll be destroying an eyesore that is the monument of foolish god deesu."

A fireball shot by the yellow clothed demon smashed the small shrine.

"You, do you hate gods?"

"I loathe both the foolish god and the god of pestilent deesu. I only believe in my lord nanodesu."

Looks like I can get along with this guy.



The result, it was an infringement.

My vocabulary cannot express just how dreadful the being called demon is.

The yellow clothed demon's fire magic was vividly striking enough that I could imagine him fighting against that black dragon.

We saved the female hostages and freed the soldiers that had been enslaved while his fire magic was reducing the lizardkin and lionkin armies to ashes.

"Tarou-sama, we have annihilated the enemy forces and captured the lionkin's women and children. What would you like to do with them."

"Kill them, but do not torment them. Do it in a single stroke."

I had determined myself to do that even while holding the Japanese sense of guilt.

If I showed mercy here, the lionkin would go after the weaselkin afterward.

"The grief and resentment of the innocents are pleasant deesu."

"What bad taste."

"That's the kind of existence demons are desu. More importantly, I'm here for the reward deesu."

I face the yellow demon.

"Do you know the location of Troll Rock desuka? It looks like this desu."

A hologram of a strangely shaped rock floated in front of the yellow

clothed demon.

"I do. That's the one in the bottom of the ravine."

In our village, there was a rumor that you'd get cursed or go missing if you got close to it.

"Most excellent deesu. After four hundreds years, the shape of the land has changed from the battle between the foolish god and the god of pestilence, how very troubling desu."

I guided the yellow clothed demon to the rock.

When the yellow clothed demon touched the rock, one part of the rock disappeared, showing a set of stairs.

"Your eggs would break if you do not strengthen your mind desuyo."

"Eggs?"

I went down the stairs in confusion.

--Fear.

A fear that felt like an icicle piercing my heart bound me down.

"That's the troll demon lord desu. He's the most ancient of demon lords, sealed in this land, he's recording the secret of the world on those slates desu."

Knowledge is power.

"I also want to read that language."

"You can call me whatever you like desu. Incubating the eggs is one of my jobs too deesu. I could make you the king of the world if you wish for it dyesu."

I sold my soul to the devil, and obtained various knowledge from the yellow clothed demon.

I obtained an ancient artifact called Screw, capable of manipulating monsters, at Rumooku Kingdom, and researched the development of robot-like heavy machinery golems, rapidly gaining power.

Most importantly, now that I got a gigantic resources called monsters after securing the power of Screw--I had gotten a hold of an abundant of materials for both food and arms.

After securing plentiful food and enough forces to repulse foreign enemy, we gathered our brethren who were living in the surrounding nations, and rallied ratkin and foxkin people who lived in poverty, and the weaselkin village eventually grew to be called a country.

And then--.

"A pleasure to meet you, King Tarou and Crown Prince-dono, I'm Touya who will be assisting you per Yellow Clothes-dono's request."

--With the wisdom and tactics of the black clothed Tactician who called himself Touya, we annexed the once eastern big three countries of the lionkin, tigerkin and lizardkin, and our country became known as an empire.

"You're not going to dispatch troops to the ash ratkin and the longhair ratkin countries?"

"Yeah, that place is our benefactor's homeland."

I wouldn't be here without warrior Mize.

"Even if I obtain the world, I won't meddle with them if the kings of those lands do not wish to be under our empire."

"Is that right, then I will abide by my emperor's wish."

Tactician Touya bowed like a retainer.

"Touya, what's your and Yellow Clothes-dono's goal exactly?"

"I am not aware of Yellow Clothed-dono's goal. My goal is to beckon my lord to this land and exterminate the foolish gods."

I thought he was speaking nonsense to flatter me, but Touya's eyes were bereft of any lies.

Apparently, he was a comrade called in by my [Luck] all along.

"What are you going to do after exterminating the gods?"

"After that huh--the owner of this body, Trazayuya wants the elves to lead mankind into a calm gentle world--"

Tactician Touya burst into laughter in the middle of his words.

"That'd be nice if possible, but this world cannot endure a battle that would destroy the foolish gods. The god of pestilence refereed by Yellow Clothes-dono--the dragon god can even crush a planet."

I could easily imagine the myth that Tactician Touya heard from the long-living High Elves.

According to the records in the Slate Room, battles between gods during the age of gods destroyed many continents, people were driven to the brink of extinction.

As I thought, there is really a need to beat the gods with our hands as people.

"Only dragons and demon lords can reach gods."

However, the [Golden Wild Boar King] revived by Yellow Clothes-dono and his cohorts and the [Dog-Head Ancient King] revived by Touya's

master were both destroyed by Hero Nanashi.

That person just might be able to win against gods.

Judging from the Star Fall at the Dragon's Valley, he is powerful enough to challenge the dragon god and survive, he's even destroyed the Demon God's Offshots at Shiga Kingdom.

"Tarou, only a fool relies on uncertain elements."

"You're right. Relying on uncertain elements is like praying to god."

We will do what we as people can do with our own hands.

Before the gods destroy this land--.

15-Intermission 4. At Muno Earldom

*

※It's rather shortish.

"Father, is that a potted--vegetable?"

"This isn't vegetable, Soruna. This is called Bonsai, a culture from hero-sama's country, you see."

I'm currently pruning the Bonsai sent from Echigoya Firm in the family-only living room.

It is said to be a pastime of gentlemen in Hero-sama's world, it is truly profound.

I put the Bonsai on the table so Soruna can see it well.

Enjoying my rare time together with my daughter while viewing the Bonsai.

Noisy footsteps rushed into that peaceful space.

"Big news!"

Consul Nina rushed into the room.

--How unusual.

There's only a few things that could make her expression change.
I could easily expect what happened.

"Did Satou-kun do something distinguished again?"

"Distinguished? It's nothing as plain as that."

--Oh?

He's the person who defeated a Floormaster in Selbira Labyrinth and liberated this city from powerful monsters in just half a day.

To make Consul Nina shaken when he's such a person already, I'm excited to hear what he did.

"Would you tell me what he did then?"

I readied myself.

After all that has happened, I will listen to it without getting surprised.

"Satou and his companions defeated a demon lord."

D-demon lord?

defeateddemonlord?

Defeated? Demon lord?

Demon lord demon lord, demon l-o-r-d, demon lord....de-demon lord?!

"W-what'd you sayyy!"

I shouted out loud from the depth of my heart.

After Soruna patted my back and I received cold water from the maid, I finally regained my sense.

Even though I had prepared myself, I couldn't help but get surprised by this.

Who would have thought that he would do something that would be recorded in the annals of history--.

"W-what should I do, Nina?"

"C-calm down."

Looks like Consul Nina isn't able to hide her unrest just like me.

"Sa-Satou-kun said in his letter that he was visiting Hero-sama to support him, wasn't it Hero-sama who defeated the demon lord?"

"We don't know the detail yet. A global notice from the Royal Capital has arrived on the City Core terminal. Haven't you seen it yet?"

"Oh sorry, it seems I've overlooked it."

Come to think of me, I think something sounded when I was pruning the Bonsai's branches.

By the way, Soruna was only lightly surprised, "Oh my."
She might be the biggest shot in the family here.

◇Nina's Point of View◇

Earl Muno who confirmed the City Core terminal said something unexpected.

"--A summon from His Majesty?"

"That's right. His Majesty wants to give words of praises to Satou-kun's exploits."

I got a headache when I saw Earl Muno who didn't comprehend the graveness of the matter.

"Do you understand what it means?"

"Yes, it's quite an honor."

Wrong.

"His Majesty's ulterior motive."

"Ulterior motive?"

I sighed at the parroting Earl Muno.

This whole family really can't read the underside of things.

"His Majesty is probably going to raise your peerage to Marquis, in exchange he'd ask you to hand over Satou to be his direct retainer."

"EEH?!"

The Earl shouted in surprises at my prediction.

It's sad, but considering Satou's distinction, it's probably for the best.

"C-can't we decline it, Nina."

What is this blockhead saying?

"I-I mean, I promised Satou when I gave his peerage to protect him and his family."

Oy oy, you're gonna go against the king for Satou's sake?

The opponent is too much no matter how you look at it.

"If you decline this, you won't ever rise to Marquisdom in your generation. It's probably only going to get a reconsideration in your grandchildren generation."

Were Orion capable, it might have been possible in his generation, but it's probably out of question since that kid's not good at socializing.

"Even so, I don't mind. My position as an Earl right now is due to Satou-kun's assistances."

The earl spoke gallantly.

That's certainly true, normally it'd have taken 10 years, and even with my plans, becoming an earl on the next generation would have been most satisfactory.

"Well, you're the one deciding it."

The things I can do is giving advices and implementing what Earl Muno decides.

No matter what predicament we would fall into as a result, I feel that it'd be fun as long as we're with Satou.

My job as a consul should have compelled me to remonstrate the territory lord though.



"Earl, there's a letter."

10 days after that news shook up Shiga Kingdom, a letter arrived through the Griffon Mail.

Of course, the only one who would send a letter with such an expensive service is Satou.

There wasn't any detail regarding demon lord subjugation in the letter addressed to me.

It was full of trivial things like how the banquet with the hero party at Dejima Island was fun and how he had stocked up many interesting souvenirs from Dejima Island so asked me to look forward to it.

Therefore, I'm guessing that if there's anything important, it should be

written in the letter for the earl.

I look at the earl's expression as he reads the letter.

The earl who was reading nonchalantly suddenly raised his face in surprises.

"B-big news, Nina!"

"W-what sorta things did that guy do this time!"

I look at the letter from the earl's side in a hurry.

"It's written here that we're going to Saga Empire."

"--Ha?"

"We can visit the Hero Summoning Room of Parion Temple by Her Imperial Princess's invitation!"

The earl stressed that.

"W-what are you talking about...."

Incomprehensible.

A visit to the Hero Summoning Room?

He used the stupidly expensive Griffon Mail just to report that?

Besides, I can't think of that as more important than the story about the demon lord subjugation.

However, it seems I was the only one who thought that here.

"Father, that's so wonderful!"

Soruna-dono and the earl are both exalted.

Good grief, these parent-child are really alike.

In the end, no details were written in the letter for the earl either. Satou is probably going to this castle before heading to Saga Empire, I intend to ask him about the details at that time.

Good grief, that guy is too unconcerned about his own exploits.

My mouth formed a smirk when I thought of the time Satou returning to this castle.

I'm going to surprise him back to get even and complain about the troublesome things and political strife Muno Earldom will fall into from now on, and--.

--A grand festival held in Muno Earldom to celebrate Satou's exploits.

A parade would be nice.

I order the maids to prepare for the festival while imagining the troubled look on his face as he's a guy who's not fond of looking showy.

Now then, prepare yourself, Satou!

<TLN: Reminder that the parts after ※ are the author's notes.>

※ Next update is undecided.

※ I planned to write the scene where Satou arrives and they have a get together, but I ran out of time and could only write this much. I'm sorry....

15-Intermission 5. At Muno Earldom (2)

*

"Has it come into view?"

"Yes, Satou-sama."

I received a report as the airship was about to arrive at Muno Castle and went to the airship from the Solitary Island Palace.

This airship isn't the property of the Tourism Ministry, but my personal one, it has been disguised to look shabby outwardly.

I've also reduced the maximum speed, it can only move as fast as a scooter.

The brownies who are in control of the airship said, "It has a taste that can't be found in the light ship and the newest model, nice", to me about the ship.

"Been a while since we were here hasn't it."

"Nn."

Mia nodded at Arisa who went out of the Solitary Island Palace after me.

"I wonder if the earl would be pleased with the souvenir?"

"It's alright~?"

"That's right nanodesu! There's no one--not many people who don't like meat nodesu!"

Tama and Pochi assured the worried Lulu that it'd be alright.

Pochi probably changed her words midway since Mia was in her view.

"Let's dismantle it immediately once we arrive there."

"Yes, Liza-san."

Lulu replied Liza's suggestion with a nice smile.

Liza had a serious expression on her face, but since her tail is swinging rhythmically, there's no doubt that she's looking forward to the meat dish that follows after the dismantling.

"So this is Karina-sama's home town."

"I've been wondering, is that an orchard?"

Zena-san is looking at the surroundings, Sera spoke while gazing at an orchard in the distant.

"Yes, we've opened a Lulu orchard with the cooperation of Viscount Emlin."

"Viscount Emlin's--"

Sera put a serious look on her face when she heard my reply.

My Attentive Ears skill picked up her mumbling, "To think they'd use that tactic to send their daughter in...." for some reason.

Viscount Emlin's second daughter, Lady Lina came to the earldom to work as Earl Muno's eldest daughter, Soruna's lady-in-waiting. She's currently working as a representative of viceroy in Brighton city, the city I'm in charge with.

She got to somehow become the representative due to the course of events, I don't think her father had that schemed.

Sera is probably just worrying too much.

"By Lulu fruit, do you mean that high class fruit?"

"Yes, that's right."

"I never knew that there was another Lulu orchard than the ones in Oyugock Dukedom."

"That's because it won't bore fruits yet for another two years."

The princess tilted her head with her hand on her cheek.

Since she loves Lulu cakes, she's probably aware of the producing area and such.

"Master, we have a report from the brownie so I inform."

"They want us to go to the passenger cabin since the ship will be descending soon desuwa."

Nana whose report was stolen by Lady Karina wore an aura of disappointment while still being expressionless.

We'd be fine here with my [Magic Hand] but we still went back inside.

"Satou-san, the brownie at the observation deck reported that they saw a row of carriages."

I thanked Zena-san who reported with a cheerful look and opened the map.

Apparently, the row of carriages belongs to Orion-kun the eldest son of the earl, and Lady Karina's little brother.

Since it's about time for him to graduate his school at the Duchy Capital, he probably comes back to start the study to become the next head of the family, not as a temporary vacation.

In addition to his, there are more than 10 carriages reflected on the radar, and every one of them has a young noble of Oyugock Dukedom inside.

--I guess even Orion-kun has friends whom he can bring home with.

Such a rude thought flashed in my mind, but I lightly shook my head to dispel my prejudice away.



"Earl~?"

"He's waving at us nodesu!"

Tama and Pochi who found Earl Muno waving from the castle window looked up at me while pointing at him.

I assented and praised them, "Good work finding him", but the two of them misunderstood that, they rushed to the deck and jumped to the castle's window.

Their sounds of landing differed, 'Shutat' with Tama, and 'Bitaan' with Pochi but they arrived at the window where the Earl Muno was without any injury.

"M-me too!"

"You cannot Karina-sama."

I grabbed the nape of Lady Karina who was going to rush to deck, stopping her.

Good grief, she really doesn't think like a blooming noble daughter she is.

"Ooh, I'm glad to see Pochi-kun and Tama-kun looking as lively as always."

"Nihehe~? Wer back~?"

"We're back nanodesu."

I heard the conversation between Earl Muno, Tama and Pochi.

"Welcome back, what is the hydra that's hanging on the airship?"

Earl Muno asked Pochi and Tama when he saw the meat souvenir.

"Souvenir~?"

"That's right nanodesu. It's the tastiest of hydra, the three-headed hydra nanodesu."

Just as Pochi's said, among the kind of hydra that are all delicious, the three-headed one is the tastiest.

The two headed one has this strange bloodiness to it, the four headed one's meat is too hard, there's only a few way to cook it.

Liza herself thinks that it doesn't have the chewiness of a five-headed hydra, but I don't think that viewpoint is shared by many people.

"Satou-sama, we will be dropping the hydra over there."

"Yeah, I'll leave it to you."

I left it to Brownie without meddling.

After dropping the hydra at the backyard, the airship landed in the courtyard of Muno castle.

"Welcome back, Satou-kun, Karina."

"We have returned Earl Muno."

"Father, onee-sama, I'm back--!"

"My my, oh Karina."

I bowed like a noble to Earl Muno who met us in the courtyard himself. Lady Karina ran up to her family and hugged her older sister and father.

After the princess and the other girls went down and greeted them lightly, we're changing place to Earl Muno's private room.

Liza and Lulu went to the backyard to dismantle the hydra.

Along the way--.

"So that's Pendragon--Damn treacherous fiend and his usurpation plot."

--There was a young man muttering that misguided accusation.

He's not a citizen of Muno, but of Dalgan city that's located at the northern end of Oyugock Dukedom.

I'm not sure why a citizen from another fief is inside the Muno castle, but since the guards inside are only looking at him with troubled looks without asking his identity, it doesn't look like he's a suspicious person who lost his way here.

Since he said it in a volume that wouldn't get heard without the Attentive Ears skill and he was a commoner without an official position, I ignored him.

I memo'ed his name at least since it'd be troublesome if he spread some strange rumor about me.



"Ceremony for ennoblement of honorary chevalier?"

"Umu, Hauto-kun has passed his etiquette test. I think it's about time to appoint him as a honorary chevalier and get him to marry Soruna."

The first topic we had when we got to the private room was about the former fake hero Hauto turning a honorary noble.

Of course, many things, like how Lady Soruna was surprised with her eyes wide open when she met the princess for the first time and how the castle employees were peeking at the princess and Sera while hiding also happened, but let's omit that.

"Earl, we should get Zotor to be a honorary chevalier too while we're at it."

"Would they allow it?"

Earl Muno replied anxiously at Ms Nina's suggestion.

"His atonement period is about to end soon, it should be fine."

Is the [Atonement] she mentioned is in regard to how he left the army due to his dissatisfaction toward the lesser demon posing as consul and acted as a chivalrous thief?

I don't think it's a big enough sin that he ought to make up for, but I still don't really understand the value system in this world even now, so I accept it as is.

"When will the wedding ceremony be held?"

The only wedding ceremony I had attended in this world was of Tisrad, the eldest son of Duke Oyugock and Sera's elder brother.

"Ceremony?"

Lady Soruna tilted her head quizzically.

--Huh?

Maybe it's something that only family attend?

"Only the pedigreed noble at the Royal Capital hold a reception for their children other than the heir. Other nobles aren't going to come unless it's for the heir even if you invite them."

Ms. Nina said that like she couldn't believe me.

Come to think of it, traveling in this world was dangerous wasn't it.

The one inviting and the one coming would need to mobilize the army to clean up the highway, it'd cost them quite a bit.

Moreover, this world adopts polygamy so people have a lot of children, no wonder they won't hold a ceremony for every one of them.

"But isn't it too sad if we don't do anything?"

"That's true. It might be a good idea to hold something like a festival that also serves as an announcement to the populace."

At Arisa's appeal, Ms. Nina spoke while stroking her chin.

"And we've got more than enough hydra meat here, how about using it for Soruna-sama's wedding ceremony?"

"Are you sure? That much meat would net you quite a sum y'know?"

"Yes, it's always been a souvenir for the earl."

Besides, turning hydra meat into jerky makes it too hard, it's not well suited for long-time preservation.

In the first place, we hunted the hydra to hold a meat festival and also strengthen Muno Earldom's army anyway.

"Then, since Orion-kun will also come home within half a month, let's hold a wedding for both."

"Wedding~?"

"Soruna is a bride-san nanodesu!"

Lured by the excited Earl Muno, Tama and Pochi who were single-mindedly nibbling baked sweets beside him took up happy poses too. Looks like they heard us talking even though they seemingly didn't.

"Ufufu, oh father, you're too hasty."

"Really. Let's say the bridal dress, that won't be ready in just half a month."

"We also need to decorate things."

Lady Soruna chided Earl Muno while looking like she wasn't at all dissatisfied with it, Ms. Nina and Yuyurina the civil official with braided

hair told him the reasons.

The jewels that will be used as adornment seem to come from the tribute that the kobolds from the abandoned mine town gave.



"Doing an ennoblement ceremony during Orion-sama's absence! What's your objective, Pendragon!"

The young man I saw earlier snarled at me while I was heading to the ennoblement ceremony room together with Sir Zotor and Hauto-kun.

"Oy, watch your mouth."

Sir Zotor rebuked him with a scowl.

Not sure if the timing is good or bad, it's just right as Earl Muno and Ms. Nina have gone to the ceremony room.

"What'd you say you Pendragon's dog! Are you going up against this Gira-sama whom Orion-sama has entrusted to be the territory's inspector!"

I see, a fox that borrows the authority of a tiger huh--no, a rat that borrows the authority of a cat I guess?

"What is this about?"

"Our apologies, Sir Pendragon."

It seems Sir Zotor and Hauto-kun can't rebuke the young man strongly, in honor of Orion-kun the next family head.

"Hmph, if you know your place--"

"What if I do?"

I release a concentrated [Coercion] that would even bind a lesser demon up at the unpleasant young man.

It was only for an instant, but the effect was tremendous, he forgot to breathe and passed out.

"Did I overdo it?"

"No, he, a commoner, did verbally abuse a noble. Normally, he'd have been enslaved into a crime slave or executed."

Ms. Nina who came out of the corridor denied the question I asked at Sir Zotor.

"Geez, I wish Orion-dono sent someone better than this guy to inspect things."

"It seems he's a childhood friend of Orion-dono, he probably appealed to him using that?"

Hauto-dono who had been silent for a while replied Ms. Nina's grumble. I see, he can't use his friend as a spy in the Duchy Capital after all, I can understand the situation.

Though I agree with Ms. Nina, he should have first thought it through when choosing personnels.

While we were talking, she ordered the guards who was watching us at a distance to imprison the unconscious young man in the jail.

I have no interest in his fate, so I'm going to leave the punishment to Earl Munio and Ms. Nina.

Regardless of that trivial matter, Sir Zotor and Hauto-kun ennoblement proceeded smoothly, and Munio Earldom got new nobles.

It seems Sir Zotor will be elevated into Honorary Baron and Hauto-kun into Honorary Baronet at the next Kingdom Conference, though they

haven't told the two yet.

It seems their ennoblement is urgently needed since Muno Earldom is lacking viceroy and governors.



"Father, I'm back!"

"Welcome back, Orion."

"Have you grown again?"

"Soruna-neesama, it hasn't been that long since we last met."

"You're getting cheeky for Orion."

"Karina-neesama, please stop with your hugging habit. My retainers are watching."

After the ennoblement ceremony, we greeted Orion-kun's party that had just arrived.

Muno family sure has a lot of skinship.

Orion-kun's eyes that were softened from meeting his family turned grave when he saw me.

--Huh?

He seemed normal despite his bursting sister complex when he went with us to Brighton City and during the liberation of the abandoned mine town, I wonder what happened?

"Orion-sama!"

The young man Gira who should have been detained earlier rushed here together with some men with unpleasant looks who seemed to be his friends.

Orion-kun looked nostalgic somewhat, but it seemed he couldn't remember their names as he didn't speak of it at all.

Gira and his cohorts didn't seem to notice that as they stood in front of him with their hands pointing at me to condemn me.

"Really now, they look like underlings who'd be crushed doing domestic administrations."

"Indeed."

I agreed to Arisa's muttering.

It'd be annoying if this guy left a bad taste on our reunion at Muno Earldom.

I look for the highly stealth mind magic [Stun Hand] in the Magic Column.

"Multiplied~?"

"Lots and lots of noble person nanodesu."

Tama and Pochi who saw the young nobles getting down from their carriages reported.

It seems these two have completely forgotten about it, but you girls are also nobles with peerage now you know?

"There's a lot of pretty ones."

"You're right. You can make an otome or a girl game with this line up."

There's a lot of women among Orion-kun's friends.

I'm thinking that they might be candidates to be Orion-kun's mistress.

"Hahhahha! The heaven is on our side!"

The young man Gira triumphantly said that.

A young nobleman stepped forward beside him.

It's a refreshing handsome young man who'd be high in the class caste somehow.

The young man Gira grinned at the entry of his comrade.

However--.

"Hey, you're in the way."

The young noble man lightly pushed the young man Gira away, came before me and lightly bowed.

"Nice to meet you, Viscount Pendragon-sama. I'm the grandson of Marquis Lloyd, Izo Llyod. I have come to visit the earldom as a candidate for Orion-sama's retainer. I would love to hear about Muno Earldom from Viscount."

He's acting all friendly for some reason.

"Hold on, Izo! Stop stealing the march. Viscount Pendragon-sama, I'm Marimo from Baronet Fukke house that's related to Earl Houen--"

"Too long! My name is Myumir, daughter of Baron Jitbelt. By all means, would viscount please teach me as a senior retainer, if possible at night in a private room--"

"I'm Batts of Baronet Henz--"

Starting with the young man, the young nobles introduced themselves to me one after another.

Some carnivorous women also mixed among them, but I pretended to not notice them as I ignored them.

"T-this is...."

"They thought that they would be able to get acquainted with Sir

Pendragon if they became my retainers."

Orion-kun replied the young Gira's question.

I can see that they're really childhood friends looking at them.

"Orion-sama."

One of the maids whispered to Orion's ear.

She looked familiar, turned out she was Pina, the head maid who served Lady Karina back then.

According to Attentive Ears skill, it seems the content is about the quarrel that led to the young man Gira's imprisonment earlier.

"I do cherish the memories of us playing together when we were little."

"Orion-sama?"

The young man Gira looked puzzled at Orion-kun who suddenly spoke like he was "bidding farewell."

One of his friends that helped him escape the jail realized the situation and ran away into the crowd.

It's good that he's perceptive, but it wouldn't do me any good to leave someone who might hold an unjustified resentment alone, so I pulled his legs with [Magic Hands], letting him fall before the guards.

"I will ensure that you keep your life at the very least."

"Orion-sama.... B-but! Ori--"

The young man Gira's mouth was blocked and he got taken back to the dungeon.

"Viscount Pendragon-sama, I'm sorry for the trouble my childhood friend caused you. I will be sure to make up for it."

Whoa, he would have snarled at me together with his friend if it was the same Orion from before, but for him to apologize for his friend's impoliteness like this, looks like he's grown up in this short period of time.

"And you guys! I understand that you admire Sir Pendragon and all, but have some modesty and restraint. Don't forget that outwardly, you're candidates to become my retainers."

In a sense, what he said was servile, but there wasn't a shred of envy in Orion-kun's eyes even if it seemed like he found them unbelievable. Even though it's of a different type than Earl Muno, it appears he's establishing his own style as a territory lord.

Wonder what changed him?

"Pluump~?"

"Pregnant woman-san nanodesu!"

The answer was at the end of the eagle eyed Tama and Pochi's line of sight.

The stomach of Muse, Orion-kun's fiancée is swelling.

According to AR, it seems she has a boy and a girl twin.

The thing that has changed him must be his readiness to be a husband and a father, I'm sure.

That reminds me, the president who offered a marriage meeting to Mr. Metabo said this, "It's an environment that will promote a man to be responsible."

I still don't really understand, but that might be it.

"I think she's already in her fourth month?"

Arisa followed up with 'I know, I've got a lot of parent friends'.
Is it just my imagination or did she seemed like she ridiculed herself.

"O-O-O-Orion?"

"Ara ara, my my."

"Nice job, young master."

"O-Ori-Ori..."

Earl Muno was surprised, Lady Soruna's face was overjoyed, Ms. Nina muttered in admiration.

Lady Karina is like a broken record.

Shotgun marriages are nothing news for me, but perhaps premarital sexual relationship is unusual in this world.

"I've prepared myself to get passed over by Karina, but I never thought that Muse-dono would too."

"No worries, we're gonna catch up to them real quick."

Hauto-kun leisurely smiled at Lady Soruna.

"Now then, let us celebrate the birth of the next successive Earl of Muno this night. Lulu and I will show our skills."

"Hee, looking forward to that."

I brought along the young nobles who offered their helps and started the preparation for the barbecue festival.

Of course, I did not only prepare meat, but also salad and jelly made from sour citrus for the mother.

I was all smile before I knew it, probably because the unexpected auspicious occasion and the growth of the family of my friend were happening right before my eyes.

While watching over Mia who was singing a tune for the meat festival and Tama and Pochi who were dancing to that tune, I continued to cook in front of the wire mesh with an unusually pleasant feeling in my heart.

Celebration really is nice!

※ The next update is undecided.

Lately, the company I work at has been at its busiest yet....

15-Intermission 6. A Peaceful Day [Arisa]

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"Po-Pochi lost.... Pochi can't believe it nodesu."

"Fufuhn, this is Arisa-chan's true power!"

I childishy bragged in front of Pochi who was hanging her head down.

"Tama next~?"

"Come at me with all your secret ninja arts!"

I provoked Tama by parodying a line from a super popular beat-em up game, 「Samu☆Tama」.

"Tama, won't lose~?"

"Here I go!"

Tama's sharp kinetic vision catches my high-speed hand-throwing. Normally, I shouldn't be able to win against Tama who could act after seeing my move.

However--.

"Aryarya~?"

"Ta-Tama lost noddesu!""

--Tama's excellent kinetic vision became her downfall instead.

"See? This is Arisa-chan's phantasmagoric 『Kaleidoscope』!"

"Amazingly awesome~?"

"Gureat, nanodesu!"

After having beaten Dog Hero Pochi and Ninja Tama, I went to the final stage.

White Fort Nana who has triumphed over Magic Spear Liza and Spirit User Mia is waiting there.

"So you've gotta be the one in the showdown after all. 『Innocent Oppai』 Nana!"

"....Arisa, demanding the change of that name."

Mou, Nana, it's inelegant to complain about your nickname like that.

"Then how about 『Innocent Beauty (Face)』."

"Acknowledged so I tell."

Nana nodded.

"Now then, we've had a bit of distraction, but let's continue."

Nana and I readied ourselves.

Contrary to me who's taking the standard pose, Nana is standing naturally.

"Let's go!"

Nana quietly nodded.

"Rock paper scissors!"

Mine's paper, Nana's also paper.

The starting hands won't decide the winner.

There's only a few people who throw scissor in the beginning.

Thus it'd be either rock or paper.

"Aa, let's, GO!"

Still a draw with both paper.

"GO!!"

This time, both are scissors.

"GO!!!"

And the fourth throw finally determined the winner.

"Aw yiiiiiiiiiiiiis!"

"Arisa's victory~?"

"Victorious nanodesu!"

"Nn, strong."

I receive the praises with the phoenix pose.

Fuffuffu, this means I've secured the winner's right!

"Then Arisa will take the duty of telling Master about dinner."

Liza said that plainly.

But, looking at her tail lifelessly lying on the ground, it seems she's relatively dejected.

"Tomorrow will be me so I tell."

"Nn, winners' turn."

Mia nodded at Nana's declaration.

"Third place play-off~?"

"I won't lose Tama."

"Come on~?"

"Do your best~, nanodesu!"

While listening to Tama and Liza's rock paper scissors match behind me, I went into the teleport gate heading to Master's research lab.



"If he's not here, then he's either at Aze's place or under the tree's shade in the courtyard maybe?"

I couldn't find Master in the study room that looked like an office. It's been quite hard to find where master is ever since he could went anywhere after learning the Unique Skill [Unit Arrangement].

"--There he is."

Master is sitting on several arranged cushions with his eyes closed under a tree.

His shota-ness which hasn't changed in the least from the time we first met is truly splendid.

Especially this defenseless, eyes-closed figure, awwwfully to my liking.

....Guhe. Guhehehe.

J-just a bit okay.

I stealthily tip-toe and slip into Master's side.

I mustn't use space magic even by mistake.

He found me out immediately when I did so back then.

I wipe the drool hanging on my mouth with my sleeve and then I slip onto

Master's lap.

--So blissful.

Ehehe~, let's lean my head on Master's chest and then--.

Can't get enuff of this~.

It's so wonderful my Kansai dialect inadvertently came out.
This euphoria is enough to sustain me.

Still, Master isn't reacting eh?

I grind my head on him.

--Muhhaa.

The shota's [This is it!] smell stimulates my nasal cavity.
Ah, I can die happy like this.

Right when I raised my head while laughing like Tama, "Nihehe~", I'm met with Master's black eyes.

"--Mor, ning?"

"Ah, morning Arisa."

There it is, my favorite Shota voice.

Now it's come to this, I've gotta steel myself like a woman would.

I turn around to face Master and hug his neck--.

"What're you doing."

"Sexual harassment?"

I was going to impulsively kiss him, but Master held my forehead back.
Geez, this Cheat.

"Sexual harrassment?" --Not. You're banned from this prank."

"Yes, I'm sorry."

I obediently apologize and wait for Master's punishment.

"Don't do it again okay."

His fist touches my hair like pomf.

"Guhhaa!"

Ow, oww. It reaaally hurts.

The person himself seemed like he was holding back, but it was painful enough to make me reflexively scream.

I roll on the ground like a caterpillar for a while.

Apparently Master thinks my reaction is just an exaggerated act, it seriously hurts you know.

It's a mystery how my health gauge isn't decreasing at all.

Maybe Master has the phantom [Hold Back] skill with him.



"So, what are you here for?"

Master asked with a nonchalant face as I got up with teary eyes.

You really can't tell that he's the same great hero who defeated greater

demons and demon lords in his spare times.

"Lulu asked me to go get you since the dinner's ready."

"Oh, it's already that time huh."

Master got up and stretched himself.

This would have been the time for the shota character to show a glimpse of his navel if this were an otome game, but such a wonderful scene didn't come to pass since the hem on Master's shirt was too long.

I should think about that part the next time I'm designing Master's shirt.

"By the way Master, what are you researching?"

I asked Master while we were walking together toward the gate.

Master's pose earlier is the pose he takes when he's researching something inside the PC in his mind with his Unique Skill.

There were times when he was really doing nothing and taking a nap when he did that, but since he didn't react even after I got on his lap earlier, I'm sure of it.

"Ah, I was making anti-god equipment."

"Antigod?"

Antigod?

Antigod?

Antigod?

No--anti-god!!

"Y-you're not going to fight god next are you?!"

I don't think it's true, but Master might just be able to do it.

"Nope."

Master replied negatively with a gentle smile.

"That's right, you wouldn't--"

--Wait, I remember.

It's not might, he's already beaten the strongest Dragon God.

Master must be telling the truth since he's not the type to joke around about that.

"What's wrong?"

"It's nothing. But, you're making anti-god equipment even though you're not going to fight them?"

Master took the thinking pose when I asked him that.

It's like he's finding the words to answer me.

"Right--You can say that having the power to fight and the intention not to fight aren't necessarily antithetical I guess?"

In other words, even if Master doesn't have the intention to fight, there's a possibility that the other party (Gods) might.

When I confirmed it to Master, he nodded lonesomely.

"Yea, it looks like there are gods who like to fight, and when the times come they challenge me, I'd have a hard time if I didn't have the mean to oppose them."

--[Challenge] and [Have a Hard Time] huh.

I noticed some things that the person himself wasn't aware of in Master's words.

Master isn't concerned about victory or defeat.

It's about whether he could win easily or with a hard fight.

"Was there a time when you had a hard fight?"

"Yeah, in my battle against the Wild Boar King, I only got one mid-class magic, I also barely had any anti-demon lord weapon with me, it was really hectic."

It's rare to see tedium in Master's face, but I've got to tell this to Mito.

"Speaking of, were you able to design those anti-god equipment?"

"Well, the one for me is simple enough, but the size gets too big when I try to make them usable for Arisa, Liza and the others."

"Hee, how big?"

"It gets bigger than the small airship of the tourism ministry."

Master showed a hologram of a twin-frame spaceship-like thing in the air using light magic's [Illusion].

What's this?

What's this! It's so cool!

"Is it like the Staff Warship?"

"Ah, this one's for Arisa. For Liza and the others, something like this."

"It's like a robot, or rather, it looks like a powered exoskeleton that'd appear in a moe battle anime or a light novel."

The powered exoskeleton itself looks like it can be downsized to human size, but it seems the magic furnace and magic device parts are too big to

be installed on the frame.

Apparently Master is researching the way to deploy those parts in the Ethereal Plane.

Mounting them here would be difficult.



"Master, you were here."

"Ah, Lulu. Oh yeah, it's already time for dinner huh."

Lulu called when I was talking with Master.

Master looks so gentle, enough to make me envious, whenever he's looking at Lulu.

"Mou, oh Arisa. The meals will get cold if you don't call Master right."

"I'm sorry, Lulu-anesama."

I obediently apologized to Lulu and we went to the solitary island palace's dining room together.

Furthermore, it seems today's dinner will be with the first bonito catch from Ganika Marquisdom.

"Fresh leaves in the eyes--"

Not of mountain cuckoo, but of infant green dragon and God Bird Hisui's chirping, while listening to them, I eat the extraordinary bonito dish Lulu cooked with relish.

<TLN: From the old Japanese Haiku "Me ni wa Aoba, Yama Hototogisu, Hatsu Katsuo" that explains that upon seeing the appearance of Fresh Leaves and the chirping of the Mountain Cuckoo and the Skipjack Tuna (Bonito) is a sign that the early summer days has come.>

Since Master seems like he can change the climate of this solitary island palace at will, maybe I should ask him to change it to early summer for today?

Un, we're having another elegant meal today!

15-Intermission 7. The Journey of John Smith

*

This is before the Divine Punishment chronologically.

"Yohn Fmith, tis s'far we can accomfany you."

"Thank you, Holphelp. I'll look for another caravan from here on--and also, the name's John Smith."

I said my thanks to the deerkin man.

After leaving the northern part of Shiga Kingdom, I headed west to the center of the Center Small Kingdoms together with a caravan troupe. The highway in the Center Small Kingdoms was in bad shape compared to Shiga Kingdom's, much of it was uneven and blocked.

The most problematic thing was the monsters.
I almost died many times thanks to that.

During those times, I was 'coincidentally' saved by caravan troupes and wandering adventurers who happened to pass by.
At first I was proud of my good luck, but even I started to have my suspicion when [Stone Wolves] and [Moving Wood Bears] began to save me.

It's probably the work of the guy who gave me this arm, but I don't understand his objective.

Since he neither contacts me or restricts my actions....

"●●● ● ! "

"Ah, my bad. I still don't really get the language around here."

I look for a caravan heading west while ignoring a sexy female peddler with brown skin.

I can't negotiate with people who don't speak Shiga Kingdom's or Saga Empire's language.

Woulda loved Appraisal or Language skills, not even asking for cheat skills here.

"Onii-san with the flat face over there, care to have some Riuch's fried rice?"

"Whaddya mean by flat--"

I was speechless when I looked at the master of the voice.

An odd guy who looks like a plastered wall covered by moss is standing there.

I'm sure he'd be popular in a theme park.

"Onii-san, is this your first time seeing a Mosskin?"

"Ah, sorry for staring at ya--how much's for the fried rice?"

I could see raisin-like things among the unknown meat and vegetables mixed in the steamy fried rice that's being fried.

It's different from the Chinese-style fried rice I know, but it looks quite good.

"One full bowl of this is one copper coin."

"Give me two bowls."

I pay him with the warped copper coins of the Center Small Kingdoms, not of the Shiga Kingdom.

Although there are slight differences in size, copper coins can be used in

most countries.

Since the rate of exchange for silver coins is different when I'm going back, I'm prioritizing using up the copper coins which worth relatively less.

"Give me the bowl back once you're done with it."

"Yea, got it."

I taste the fried rice at once.

A bit salty, but it's good.

No, maybe because I sweat a lot in the long trip this saltiness tastes irresistibly good.

The unknown meat seems to have been pre-seasoned, it adds depth to the usually monotonous-tasting fried rice.

I couldn't stop my hand from spooning the fried rice into my mouth.

Right when the saltiness about to get too intense, sweetness spread on my tongue.

--Was that raisin just now.

After getting reset by the sweetness, the stimulating saltiness and the umami from the unknown meat hit me like a brick again.

This stall owner is quite good despite his plastered-wall-like face. It's as if he's the rumored [Miracle Chef] of Shiga Kingdom.

"This is some good stuff. Is this sweetness from raisin?"

"That's from date palms."

Date palms?

"My cousin is selling baskets of it at the stall over there if you're

interested."

"I see, gotta buy some later."

"If you're going, you should try your luck at the stall in front of the date palm's."

Hmm, is it a dice gambling or a rat race?

Taking a peek should be fun.

I memorized the stall's direction and held out the bowl to the mosskin.

"Another bowl please."

Good food in a trip is a once-in-a-lifetime encounter.

You don't know if you'll ever get to eat it again later on.

I decided to slowly enjoy my third bowl.



"--Rubik's Cubes?"

Toy Rubik's Cube I'm familiar with are lined up on the stall, though they might be of a different kind since they have five square rows on each side.

"Yo, niisan, wanna try your luck?"

"Luck?"

"Yeah! Turn this square thing like this and."

The stall keeper called me while stroking his well-groomed beard.

He lifted up a cube and turned it around, and then he played with it and made one side full of the same color.

"You'd get some luxurious premium stuff if you can get it like this on two sides and more."

The stall keeper showed various articles exhibited behind him. The fifth and sixth prizes are of dummies instead of the real things, probably to prevent crime.

"Saga Empire's--『Appraisal Orb』, and the other one is 『Interpreter Earrings』?"

The 10 gold coins prize when you get four sides of the same color is attractive, though it's probably fake. My funds have been running dry, this is just right.

I'm good at Rubik's Cube if I do say so myself.

But, before that--.

"By the way master, there's no way you can get five sides of the same color without getting six too right? Why do you have a fifth prize?"

The stall keeper sighed greatly at my question.

"Not all of them are as educated as you y'see."

"No well, either way isn't it just obvious?"

"That's not exactly true. If I left out the fifth prize, there'd be a lot of folks asking, 『Don't you have a fifth prize?』. Explaining to them that they'd always get six colored sides when they get five every time is troublesome, so I just put up a prize for it."

I see....

"Then that means there's no fifth prize?"

"Hm? I'll let you have it if you can get six sides on the same color."

The stall keeper put on a face like he was saying "try it if you can" while waving his hand.

That attitude only fires me up.
Let's get to the point.

"Is there a time limit?"

"Only until this hourglass drops. I'll let ya reverse it when it does if you pay me another 10 copper coins."

"As many times as I want?"

"As many times as you want s'long you have the cash."

I see, good thinking.

This would hook people who have low gambling-resistant to put out all their money.

I confirm the cash I have on hands.
Doing it on the first try is impossible.

But I should be able to get all of them with four silver coins, no, five.

"First time is only five copper coins."

"Is that fine with one side cleared like this?"

"Think of it as a service for beginner."

The stall keeper started the hourglass at the same time I started moving the Rubik's cube.

I easily cleared two sides after a few rotations.

"Whoa, ain't ya a promising newbie! You already got two sides! How bout it? You'd get one small silver coin if you stop here."

You're one to talk after letting it easy for me to get two sides.

The stall keeper raised his voices while smiling indifferently, attracting the peanut gallery around.

I'm not good with attentions, but I can't use [Burying] in this situation. I concentrate on the Rubik's Cube while telling myself [That's a pumpkin], [This one's a cabbage] in my mind.

"Aah! He broke it off after getting four sides!"

"T-ten gold coins!"

"That guy, oh no."

I frantically move my hands while ignoring the peanut gallery.

My wallet has already been emptied.

I've got to clear all sides before the last hourglass no matter what!

"Oh oh oh, almost all the sand's fallen."

The stall keeper deliberately tried to hurry me up.

"Aaah, oh no oh no oh no."

Ah, geez.

The oh-no woman is noisy.

"3,2,1--"

--Got it!

"Ze--"

I held out the cube right before the stall keeper could fully declare zero. The stall keeper's face was hardened in surprise.

"Whoaaaaa!"

"First time I see someone did it."

"●●●●●!"

"●●●! You're awesome!"

Surprises and congratulations welled up among the peanut gallery.

I confirm the stall keeper's reaction while feeling embarrassed.

If this guy tries to run away, I've got to get the money I paid him at least.

"Ah! The box!"

"What the heck?!"

"Sand?"

The cube I submitted collapsed into six-colored glittering sand.

The stall keeper snatches an obsidian ring-like thing inside the sand.

"Hahaha, this is it! This is one of the artifacts hidden inside 『Cube of Myriad Truth』! You did well youngster! These are your promised rewards. Accept them!"

The ecstatic stall keeper took out an Orb and earrings from item box-like black cross-section and threw them to me.

"I'll give you these gold and silver pouches too. Take all the remaining stuff too! ■■■■...."

I caught the things the stall keeper threw and put it inside my bosom.

".... ■ Fly"

The stall keeper floated, and flew to the southwest direction while laughing loudly.

With his lines earlier and all these mid-boss-like things he did, I don't

wanna go anywhere near southwest.



--Not here?"

I bought date palms to be my preserved food in the trips, and signed a contract to board a caravan's sand boat heading to the one of the most prosperous trade country among the western ones, Garleon Union. After hearing that caravan would embark tomorrow, I went back to the stall that served the superb fried rice earlier, but it was already vacated.

"Excuse me, when is the stall here going to open in the morning?"

"Huh? The guy that was there just opened today. A catkin and a dogkin brats came to pick him up."

"Hmm, you think he's gonna open again tomorrow?"

"Who knows."

I purchase sand rate skewers from the stall of this indifference old man.

--Eurgh.

Sand is gritting inside my mouth, looks like it's not well prepared. Nevertheless, I'm not going to throw them away like when I was in Japan. I crammed the skewers into my mouth while ignoring the taste and pour unrefined sake I bought on the other stall down my throat.

And then, next day--.

I went back to the stall street to look for the stall that sold the fried rice yesterday, but I couldn't find any mosskin after all, his cousin stall that sold date palms was also nowhere to be found.

They probably belonged to some caravan troupes and were only doing side jobs yesterday.

"I'm sure we'll meet again if fate allows."

After muttering something I didn't believe myself, I joined the caravan I'd be riding on and left the town.

"What's that, so pretty."

"Forget about it. That kid doesn't understand western countries language."

I look back at the dark brown beauties who are riding the caravan together with me.

"It's an Orb."

"Orb?"

"Oh? You can speak western countries language."

One of the beauties said in admiration.

The [Interpreter Earrings] I got yesterday appeared to be genuine. Therefore, this Orb of [Appraisal] is also highly likely to be genuine.

However, I feel that I'd be better off using the money I'd get from selling this kind of Orb.

This is troubling.

"A Sand Pig is coming! Anyone who can use a bow, get ready!"

"Our turn~"

"You too come here! Pebbles vomited by a Sand Pig could easily break through a plank unless it's made of iron!!"

I rolled behind the sand ship's iron plank while being hugged by a voluptuous beauty.

"That thing's sturdy! Arrows from a small bow won't work on it."

"Just shoot! It'll work as a diversion."

Diversion is fine huh.

I don't wanna leave this lucky situation where I'm being hugged by beauty, but this situation seems dangerous if it keeps up.

I part myself from under the beauty's arm in grief.

"H-hold on!"

"My shotgun is perfect as a diversion."

I unwrapped the cloth hiding my gun and loaded it with some bullets.

Aim at the Sand Pig swimming in the sand.

It won't reach at this range, though not like it'd be really damaging even if it did.

But the roaring sound and the impact on the sand will be quite something, me think.

I pull the trigger after narrowing down the timing on the shaking ship.

--It hit?

Looks like a lucky hit grazed the Sand Pig's eyes.

"You're pretty good! I'm Miji, an archer and a dancer."

"Oh my my, Miji sure works fast. I'm Rouri, and you?"

Eyes of two beauties filled with admiration are turned at me.

"I'm John Smith. Just John Smith."

I personally thought it was a cool self-introduction, but the two beauties didn't seem to get it.

If I find myself in the same situation next time, I should try calling myself an adventure lover.

I extolled Miji's bravery, thanked Rouri's kindness when the Sand Pig appeared and presented them date palms from my knapsack.

Looks like sweets are justice even in another world.

While I'm getting surrounded by smiling beauties, the sand ship we're riding on is en route to Garleon Union.

Would it be tranquility or stormy drama waiting for me there.

The way to another world TUEEEE looks so distant and steep.

<TLN: TUEEEE is basically the Japanese version of OP.>

<TLN: Author's note below.>

The identity of the mosskin is unclear. Of course the identities of the catkin and the dogkin who came to get the mosskin are also unclear.

This is the first appearance of the try-your-luck stall keeper recommended by the mosskin. Whether he will appear again in the future or not is undecided.

15-Intermission 8. Rumor of Demon Lord Slayer

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※ The intermission is chronologically timed after Satou and Hero Hayato defeated the demon lords in Dejima Island (before the Divine Punishment oracle).

◇ Bishtal Dukedom ◇

"Your Excellency! Your Excellency my Duke!!"

"What's with the commotion."

Duke Bishtal raised his voice in displeasure among heaps of documents inside his study room.

The duke's grandson who's studying governmental affairs as a consul rushed into the room.

Duke Bishtal thought that he was one of the superior ones amongst his relatives but he still lacked composure at times like this since he was still young.

"It's a Wyvern Mail from the royal capital! A-and it has the royal family sealing wax on it."

The duke who was only lending his ears while reading a document finally raised his head when he heard [Royal Family Sealing Wax].

The letter that came from the royal capital was stamped with the [Shiga Kingdom Sealing Wax].

The use of this wax mainly brings news about birth or funeral of the royal family or a huge incident that shakes the very core of the kingdom.

However, since emergency matters like an appearance of demons are notified through City Core, the duke retains his calm.

"Calm yourself, how unsightly."

Duke Bishtal received the letter while reprimanding the consul.

His other hands fetches a magic item to open the wax instead of a paper knife.

Heating the royal sealing wax to remove it instead of cutting it has been a custom since Ancestor King Yamato era. According to history, the practice began because the people who idolized Ancestor King Yamato didn't want to cut the royal sealing wax.

--What"

The wrinkle on Duke Bishtal's forehead deepened after he finished reading the letter.

The consul was watching him while enduring his aching stomach.

"Impossible--"

The duke was going to crush the letter out of rage, but he stopped when he saw the royal sealing wax on his desk.

"Your Excellency, what was written in the letter?"

The consul worked up his courage and asked the duke whose blood vessel seemed like it was going to rupture like 'gununu'.

"Pendragon."

Duke Bishtal squeezed the name of his bitter enemy.

"The letter said that the youngster killed a demon lord with the hero."

"Since when did Pendragon become a hero's attendant? I haven't heard of one such rumor though?"

The duke glared at the consul who was unintentionally speaking in question.

"He wasn't acting as an attendant, it was a united front."

"--United front?"

Duke Bishtal threw the letter onto his desk and jerked his chin to urge the consul to read it.

"Please excuse me."

The duke gulped down a glass of brandy the maid brought while the consul was reading.

The transparent cubes inside the glass weren't ice cubes, but rock sugars, a native product of the sugar producing area in Raragi kingdom.

"D-demon lord slayer--"

Duke Bishtal gulped down his second glass of brandy while watching the consul with a displeased expression.

"If this keeps up, his patrons, Oyugock and Dukus's influence will grow stronger."

"Wasn't Pendragon under patronage of Earl Muno?"

"Muno has always been Oyugock's string. Oyugock probably sent the youngster to Muno territory to solve the problem there in the first place."

An old butler who was working quietly inside the study room reacts to Duke Bishtal.

"Demon Lord slayer--"

The old butler's slit eyes narrowed further and he nodded.

"--You're very fortunate master."

"Fortunate you say."

The old butler didn't flinch at the boiling Duke Bisthal and continued on. On the other hand, the consul's existence was forgotten like air as he trembled with the letter on his hands.

"Yes, fortunate. There might be some discord between the two of you in the beginning, but it was concluded peacefully, and Her Highness Shistina has become Sir Pendragon's legal wife. Being the grandfather of his legal wife would be a huge advantage to you."

People that are connected to Viscount Pendragon might insist that she's not his [Legal wife, but a candidate of legal wife] but from most noble's point of view, having an unmarried woman traveling together abroad and with her parents approving it, they might as well already be a pair of wife and husband.

Even if the person in question denied it, people would just talk in the back, "What is it now after all this time", or "They had some dispute and got divorced."

"I see, we have Shistina. I thought she was good-for-nothing for declining the marriage into Earl Lesseu house, but it seems she's useful for something in the very end."

He'd look like a garbage parent or maybe a garbage grandfather in modern Japan, but with this country's common sense, nobles see their daughter as a unit to tie houses of noble together, so he's not exactly a special case of garbage.

"At present, there's a discord between Sir Pendragon and master, but now is the time to show the dignity of the elderly, Master might want to show your good will and concede here."

"Are you telling me to lower my head to him?"

"No, there is no need to do such a foolish thing."

The old butler slowly shook his head.

"Master can simply give the viscount the things he wanted."

"You realize that the rumor said that he's a strait-laced guy who can't be flattered with money or women right?"

Numerous nobles approached Viscount Pendragon with marriage proposals with their daughters, and many offered him positions in order to build connections, but not even one swayed him.

There was even a rumor that he was into men, but even though many nobles brought handsome young men, men, old men or men with muscles to him, none tugged his heartstrings.

Few people know the fact that he also declined a position on Shiga Eight Swords.

"They failed because they approached with general taste as their standard and without investigating his preference."

"Hou?"

Duke Bishtal shakes his brandy glass and urges the butler to continue.

"The viscount is a moderate ladies' man. The rumor says that his favorite is young girls that haven't come of age, but this is a fake info that Duke Oyugock faction spread. A lot of people swallowed that fake info whole because many of his retainers look young."

"In other words, he likes women with huge breasts and ass?"

The old butler shook his head at that question.

"No, he likes girls with poor figures."

"You're basing that on?"

"After further investigation, we know that he takes good care of a maid retainer with poor figure more than Her Highness and the duchy lady."

The old butler replied full of confidence at Duke Bishtal's doubtful eyes.

"Also, he likes to help people in trouble, that is another fact. I think we should make use of that to send in honest people with poor figure from noble houses under Your Excellency's tutelage."

The old butler explained that the viscount could suspect their intention if they sent people with the same reason so they should hire a good director from some theater to create the situation.

"Fumu, just that won't be enough."

Even if House of Duke Bishtal's influence grow after they manage to send people into Viscount Pendragon, they won't be able to make use of his power at critical times.

"Yes, therefore we should present the viscount with things that he can't refuse under Your Excellency name."

The old butler said that he wouldn't decline if they sent gifts to congratulate for the [Demon Lord Slayer] matter.

"Other nobles will probably send him gifts too. Stuff that can eclipse those gifts are likely only the mithril sword 『Rock Bone King』 or magic sword Shaitan handed down in my duchy house."

Those two are too precious, Duke Bishtal's frowned.

"No, we need not either. I have done an investigation on that matter too."

"Great as always, Geezer! And what is it."

The duke praised the confident old butler and urged him to continue.

"Yes, it's rare 『Spell Scrolls』, as well as 『Chant』 and 『Magic』 Orbs."

The old butler said that he acquired the information by using a huge amount of gold coins.

His information is correct.

No, to be more precise, [It was correct].

The fact that that info was old is the fatal point, but there is no one who could point that out in this place.

"He had an intimate relationship with Viscount Shimen who supervises a scroll workshop in Oyugock Dukedom, and both Marquis Ashinen, the viceroy of Labyrinth City and Earl Seryu bought up Chant and Magic Orbs."

"Is there any point collecting more than one Chant Orb?"

"That is only if he uses it for himself. There is a lot of promising explorers under his organization, 『Pendora』. He probably uses the orbs to shape those children into magic swordsmen and the scrolls to assist the weak ones."

The old butler gave the most reasonable explanation to Duke Bishtal's question.

"Then buy up those stuff."

"Understood. I will also give instructions to look for suitable girls."

The old butler bowed and left the room.

"Kukuku, I'm really lucky to have excellent subordinates under me."

The consul had a slight uneasiness as he was watching the back of Duke Bishtal who went to the courtyard.

He didn't open his mouth out of fear of the duke's wrath, and he left the room like a shadow.

Looks like he's decided to watch the duke's plan to go smoothly from afar.

◇Shiga Kingdom Royal Castle◇

"Ancestor King-sama, pardon me for calling you."

"Hold on, I told you to stop with that Ancestor King-sama stuff. Just call me Duchess Mitsukuni Mito."

The king, the prime minister and Duchess Mitsukuni are inside the king's private room.

"After the matter about Demon Lord Slayer the other day, many more nobles appealed for Viscount Pendragon to become a direct retainer of the Royal Family."

"Well, guess so."

Mito couldn't hide her elated expression even though she sounded like she couldn't believe it.

"I am thinking of promoting him to be an earl, changing his master from Earl Munro to Royal Family and appointing him to be the viceroy of either Trade City or Labyrinth City."

"You can't."

Mito rejected the idea of the king who carefully chose his words.

"Would you tell us the reason."

"Don't change his master. Ichirou--Sir Pendragon told me that he became a noble because he was fond of Earl Muno. And it seems he agreed to be a viscount after hearing that it was a condition for Muno-san to be an earl, he might run away if you're being too forceful, you see."

The king froze from to the culture shock since the reason was too far apart from common nobles.

"Your Majesty. I think Ancestor--Mito-sama is most likely right. The viscount also only agreed to the position of Vice-Minister of Tourism Ministry because the order was to investigate delicacy and tourist attractions."

It's far too different from royal court nobles who compete every day for a position in the government.

Only one who nodded in this place, Mito who muttered, "That's so like Ichirou-nii."

If someone with an achievement as great as Demon Lord Slayer, that hasn't been seen since Ancestor King Yamato, run away, the dignity of Royal Family will be greatly shaken.

The king stares at Mito like he's relying on her.

"However, we must bestow gifts to someone who has slain a demon lord."

"Then how about promoting Sir Pendragon to earldom and Muno-san to Marquisate?"

"Such thing is--"

--not possible, was what the king wanted to say, but he stopped since that wasn't the case.

"It's possible. It might be due to Mito-sama's Echigoya Firm's assistance and Sir Pendragon's enormous fund, Muno Earldom is reviving at an impossible rate. It's only a matter of time before it's equal to the past Muno Marquisate."

The prime minister continued after offering an unusual western snack to Mito.

"Persuading Bishtal and Kelten would be difficult, but once those two are curbed, there will be nothing that can stop it."

"Well then. I will do something about those two."

Mito is delightfully biting a thin baked sweet while ignoring the two who are discussing seriously like it's none of her business.

"You'd get it even harder if Sir Pendragon did something even greater after his promotion this time huh."

Mito's comment was absolutely improbable, but after doing leaving a feat as impossible as [Demon Lord Slayer], the prime minister and the king couldn't laugh it off and had a miserable expression on their faces. Looks like even the king and the prime minister of a prominent kingdom on the continent find the existence of a retainer who's too excellent unmanageable.

◇Shiga Kingdom Capital, Royal Academy◇

"Shiro-kun, Crow-san, did you hear the news?"

"What's wrong Tina-sama."

"Good morning, Tina-sama."

Tina Kelten, the daughter of Marquis Kelten, rushed into the room in

excitement.

At her rare state that's unlike her usual graceful behavior, line of sights inside the classroom are gathered to her.

"What is it about?"

"Viscount Pendragon-sama's great achievementt!"

Shiro and Crow look at each other when they heard 'great achievement'. Since most of the two girls' master's acts were great achievements, they didn't know which one it was about.

However, other people don't know about that.

"Oh my, you haven't heard it?"

Tina said like she couldn't believe it.

"Which one?"

"Viscount Pendragon-sama and Saga Empire Hero Hayato-sama challenged the 『Phantasmal Labyrinth』 of Dejima Island together."

Shiro thought, "Maybe it was about the time Masita became Dungeon Master?" but she did the mouth zip pose, taught by Pochi, in her mind and didn't spoke it out.

"Hee, Shiro and Crow's master is Hero-sama's acquaintance."

"Amazing."

"No wonder Tina-sama took them under her wings."

Tina made a big gesture to silence the children's whispering. She's going to speak the best part.

"Viscount-sama and Hero-sama went through many distress and confronted a demon lord at the deepest part of the labyrinth!"

The children cowered and muttered weakly, "Demon lord."

Just like how Showa children hide their navel when they hear a thunder, the children in this world huddle together when they hear 'demon lord'.

"There's nothing to fear! Viscount-sama and Hero-sama cooperated together to fight the demon lord, and came out victorious!"

As if Tina's excitement was infectious, excitement and joy welled up in the children's face.

"It's the birth of Demon Lord Slayer since Ancestor King Yamato-sama! No, since Ancestor King Yamato was a hero, it's the first birth of Shiga Kingdom Demon Lord Slayer in history!"

Chorus of [Demon Lord Slayer] began inside the classroom. Shiro and Crow who kept their calm thought it was a bit scary.

"I will declare here! I, Tina Kelten, will become Viscount Pendragon-sama's wife!"

"I will too!"

"Me too!"

"Me (boku) too!"

With Tina's declaration, the little girls inside the classroom got swept up in the mood and declared their marriage proposals.

There were some strange ones mixed in, but since it's not good to discriminate by gender, Shiro and Crow didn't interject and quietly clapped their hands while saying, "Masita, so popular."

The same thing happened in the classroom of Rumooku Kingdom's princess Menea, and everywhere in the Royal Capital, nobles and citizens marched on toward Viscount Pendragon's mansion, compelling ten percent of the guards stationed in the capital's garrison to organize the

onlookers.

Viscount Pendragon who likes to tour around probably never imagined that his own mansion would become a tourist attraction itself.

◇Shiga Kingdom, Monastery at the eastern end of the Royal Territory,
Viewpoint of a maid attendant of the third prince◇

"PEN, DRAGOOOOOOOOOOON!"

At an enclosed corner of the monastery, a man who looks like an elderly is shrieking at the dusty ceiling.

I ran away outside the room out of fear of the man's frenzy.

As his maid attendant, maybe I should have soothed him here, but scary thing is scary.

Nuns who are running in the corridor from the courtyard direction call out to me.

"H-hold on, what's happening with His Highness?"

"It's more awful than the usual fit."

I raised my eyebrow at the onlooker's curiosity.

"Geez! It's because you were talking about that in the courtyard!"

"Courtyard...."

"Nothing like that--"

The nun was going to say that they didn't talk about anything weird, but then she recalled a certain thing and put her hand on her mouth.

"--Are you talking about the news of Viscount Pendragon-sama

exterminating a demon lord?"

"It's not exterminating, he slew a demon lord."

"Aw c'mon, exterminating is fine."

<TLN: 'Exterminating' here usually used for pest.>

I interrupted the two's lively chat and said, "That's it, that's the one!"

"His Highness flew into a rage because you two were gossiping about."

"Eeh"

"He couldn't have heard it from that distance."

"He did."

For some reason the noisy birds and insects that were usually chirping to the limit of their souls were silent today, so chatters from the courtyard that couldn't usually be heard could today.

"Ouch, sorry about that."

"It was a mistake, sorry sorry."

"We'll share you some honey cake."

--Honey cake!

A-are you a god!

Giving honey cake as an apology despite being in a monastery strict about sweets!

I coughed to clear my throat and nodded.

"I-I've got no choice."

I fumbled my word, but it couldn't be helped.

I mean, it's honey cake.

Ignoring the nuns' laughing glances and the His Highness's shrieks

behind, I went to the nuns' room in elation.

Since His Highness still tried to escape when I came back, I told the monastery guards about it and got to enjoy a quiet night in a while.

I thought His Highness would be brought back immediately, but he was nowhere to be found the next day.

It seems that it would take a long time before I could hear the name of His Highness--Third Prince Sharlick again.

In other words, my peaceful days will continue in the meantime.

✧ Next update is undecided, but it looks like the schedule could be back to normal on July.

Until that, I have to work on the book version, so the updates will be irregular like this in the whole June.

I'm sorry for readers who look forward to the web version, but please forgive me about this.

Additionally, the anime is largely getting worked out by the editorial department, there's very little burden on the author part (I'm still supervising it~)

15-Intermission 9. Divine Punishment Day, Front Line

*

"Captain! There's someone in a forest nearby!"

"Hm? Is it someone who hasn't taken refuge yet?"

I look through the Farsight Pipe after hearing my subordinate's report.
True enough, I could see a lizardkin and a catkin girls in the thicket near a forest.

They probably didn't hear about the evacuation order since they were living deep in the mountain.

I nod once and look at the surroundings.

Looks like there's no one else.

"No choice, let's go help them."

"Yes sire! Bring on additional two horses."

The adjutant gave an order following mine.

Four horsemen descended the hill, heading to the forest.

"Haa, the glorious Seventh Knight Company babysitting lost children."

"Careful with your mouth. This is a Royal Order just you know."

After receiving the notice about Divine Punishment, we, the Kingdom's Seventh Knight Company have been encamped at the southern mountains.

In order to evacuate the kingdom's populace and hold down the Monster Stampede here.

『Liza, knight people are coming~?』

『That appears to be the case.』

From afar, the lizardkin and catkin girls stopped plucking grass and looked at us.

They said something but we couldn't hear them from this distance.

They're probably frightened from a sudden appearance of fully armed knights.

"You must be people from a nearby village. By the Royal Order, the populace is too evacuate to a nearby town. You two also have to evacuate, however we cannot send guards just to escort you to the bottom. Wait in the encampment until the army carriage goes to the town."

I told the necessary info to the girls who couldn't say anything all out of surprise.

I don't know how much the ignorants are informed of, but we cannot take them away like criminals without telling them anything.

"Encampment?"

"It's at the pass over there."

I pointed at a mountain pass with a fort to show the lizardkin girl.

"If we go now, we should arrive just at the right time for meals."

"Meat~?"

"That's right, today we're having stew with meat."

"Oh, great~?"

"Hahaha, you'll get your shares too, eat and grow big."

"Aye!"

I heard my subordinates talking with the catkin kid.

I saw the kid jumping in delight when she heard about the meat stew.

She must be very happy about the meat.

If they've been living deep in the mountain, I'm sure they never ate meat unless their village elder shared some from the hunters. I really understand the kid's joy.

"So what were you two doing in the forest?"

"Master asked us to pick some medicinal herbs."

Master?

Are these girls slaves?

However, they're wearing some good clothes for slaves.

Since there's probably no one eccentric enough to have a lizardkin as a love slave, these girls must be a kind of freed slaves.

There's many cases of freed slaves calling their former master, "Master", in the northern part of the kingdom.

"Looks like you haven't got much success in your herb gathering, however, we cannot allow you to go back to the forest now."

"I understand."

The lizardkin girl nodded unwillingly.

Judging from their small bags, they mustn't have gathered enough.



"What's this? Did you kidnap some demi-human kids?"

I heard a sarcastic voice when we entered the fort gate.

Four men wearing white armor.

If the one saying that was a member of the Knights, I would have dropped my fist on them, but I can't do that against these people.

After all--.

"Shiga Eight Sword Candidates-sama have quite the imagination."

Their expressions turned sour when I emphasized the candidate part. In order to fill the vacant seats, I heard they were holding selections to be a Shiga Eight Swords member among four candidates.

The loudest rumor said that those seats would be quickly filled once Viscount Pendragon and his companions who enliven the royal capital the other day returned.

That's why these guys went to this dangerous front line in order to raise a meritorious deed.

Since they currently only ever fought wolf packs and wyverns, they must be fretting now.

"You went out for a reconnaissance right? Did you meet any monster?"

"No, there was no monster around the forest, it was as if someone went ahead and swept them out."

"Hmph, you're useless."

Shiga Eight Swords candidatess went back into the fort after leaving an irritating line.

"Still--"

Although I've heard that the monsters around this area are culled out once a year, this is the first time it's been so monster less.

"--What's wrong?"

Lizardkin and catkin girls averted their eyes while looking awkward.

"No, it's nothing."

"Uy uy~. Tama doesn't know no overhunting~?"

"Tama."

Scolded by the lizardkin girl, the catkin girl made a strange move of hand moving over her lips.

It's probably some kind of charm handed down in this area.

Right after, the catkin girl's stomach growled and we went to the courtyard where the outdoor dining room was with smiles on our faces.



"Now, have a go at the Seventh Knight Company hodgepodge stew."

"Wa~y?"

"Thank you."

They've started distributing food at the encampment just as I guessed. Since the inside of the fort is cramped, we, knights have arranged tables in the courtyard.

"Geh, today's meat is wyvern huh..."

I'm sorry for having raised the demi-human girls' expectation, but today's stew is an extremely rare miss in recent days.

Head chef Kozun of this fort is quite a skillful cook, but there's nothing that can be done with the hopelessly tough wyvern meat.

"Delish~"

"This is good."

I heard those voices nearby.

I thought they were being considerate to us, but I realized that they were being honest when I saw their expressions.

Looks like they got an eating habit so horrible such that even this tough sinewy meat tasted good for them.

"Oy oy, you serious."

"This tough smelly meat, good?"

"Tougood~?"

"It has been prepared quite thoroughly. The one who cooks this must hold everyone here dear."

The lizardkin girl had a way with words like she wasn't a freed slave.

"Hou, the girls brought by the Third Patrol sure said some good things."

"Ge geh, old man Kozun."

Head chef Kozun appeared.

Looks like he's loitering around in the courtyard after he's done with the cooking.

"Who's your old man. You brat."

"But ya know, no matter how thoroughly prepared it is, this gamey smell is just really bad."

"Try eating it along with this herb. It will weaken the smell."

"Ha? Like eating that grass will--geh, for real."

"Really--wa, ooh."

I tried the herb I got from the lizardkin girl.

--It's true.

As someone who grew up in a gourmet house, I couldn't say that this is tasty, however, it smells better now.
Now this isn't something not edible.

"But, y'know, wyvern is still wyvern."

One of my subordinates blurted out unnecessarily.
Even if that's the truth, you shouldn't have said it here.

"Then, go and fetch a better tasting animal or monster next time."
"I'll go get it for you if there's a wild boar around."

Someone reacts to the conversation between head chef Kozun and my subordinate.
The lizardkin and catkin girls.

"No wild boars~?"

"Right, I saw a Serpent Dragon (Naga) flying around, although it's a bit far away. That thing is tasty."

"Naga? If it's similar to snake, it should be good made into hodgepodge or stew."

"They're tastier grilled than stewed. The intestines are poisonous, please be careful."

"Hou, you sure know your stuff. Do you often eat them?"

"I-It's not too often."

Oy, wait.

Wait a minute.

She saw a Naga?

"Naga huh~, might as well have a taste on the legendary 『Feathered Serpent (Kukulcan)』."

"Tasty~?"

"Is that good?"

"According to an old tale, it's so good that dragons scrambled for one and sank a continent."

"Oh, jeezuz~?"

"That sounds promising."

Fools, if a Feathered Serpent (Kukulcan) really comes out, all of us will be killed in an instant.

No, not that.

Now's not the time to retort that.

"Oy, you two. When did you saw that Naga?"

"This morning~?"

"From the summit of a mountain, we saw three of them in a mountain at the seaward side."

"I'm amazed you could see them."

"We have a Farsight Pipe."

Then it's understandable.

I said my thanks to the girls and went to the commander to report it.

I don't know what kind of talk was held between the fort commanders, but after a while, a birdman scout flew to the eastern sky.



"Gale Wolves have come out of the forest!"

A soldier at the watchtower shouted out loud.

"Those monsters came at last!"

"Lower the gate! We're sortieing out!"

"Please wait. Our order is to repulse the monsters from the fort--"

"Oh shut it. What's the point of a knight being holed up in a fort."

When the soldiers were busy trying to fortify the fort, Shiga Eight Swords candidates who couldn't read the mood made a racket, demanding for the gate to be opened.

Apparently, the fort commander intends to drive off these nuisances, as the candidates departed along with their accompanying holy knights.

"Even if they've got rotten personalities, their skills with swords are reliable."

The intense light of Magic Edge surging out of the candidates' swords could be seen even from here.

They skilfully cut off Gale Wolves that are faster than horses.

"It's dangerous~?"

"Yes, it's dangerous to fight in an open space when monsters can come from the sky."

"--Sky?"

"There~?"

I saw a vague shape of something flapping wings.

That's the birdman sent out for reconnaissance.

"Between clouds."

The lizardkin girl pointed up, I looked up and saw thin black strings with clouds as the background.

The watch at the watchtower probably found it too.

He furiously beats the alarm bell, the fort's magic furnace growls.

A transparent magic wall enclosed the fort before long.

『Aye aye sir~』

『Yes, I understand. We will go to confirm it.』

I faintly heard the catkin and lizardkin girls' voices between the alarm bells.

Come to think of it, I forgot to evacuate those girls.

"This place will be full of danger. Evacuate underground while we still have time now."

"Aye~?"

"Good luck--"

After we've made sure that the catkin and lizardkin girls have left, we start the preparation to intercept the Nagas.



"Magic Cannons, fire the first and the third."

"First Magic Cannon, fire!"

"Third Magic Cannon, fire!"

The two Magic Cannons shot through the Nagas that were approaching the fort.

According to personnels who had Appraisal, they seemed to be weak level 10 monsters, but since they could spew flame like a dragon, they could bake us whole over the fort's magic wall if we were careless.

"There's no end to this."

We've killed more than 30 Nagas, but more of them are still coming.

We managed somehow since the monster's new reinforcement that came out from the other side of the mountain stopped all of a sudden, but this could get dangerous soon.

"Attention, all members! The Magic Furnace is nearing its limit. Don't waste the cannon balls! Use the Heavy Ballista and Bows along with them!"

Smoke of dangerous-looking color came out of the chimney that led to the Magic Furnace.

Looks like it's nearing its limit.

"Geh, those Shiga Eight Swords Candidates-sama are coming back."

I thought they came back to help us out, but instead they were being pursued by about 100 Gale Wolves and Hopping Bears, and even dangerous monsters like Rock Guns and Bombardment Frogs way behind them.

"I've had enough of this."

"Can't agree more."

We'd have been spared of future trouble if they were killed in action during the chase, but guys like them tend to greedily cling to their life and survive.

"Open the gate! Open the gate!!"

No one tried to open the gate, despite the demanding shouts of the Shiga Eight Swords candidate beyond.

Opening and closing the gate take time.

We cannot expose the whole fort to the risk of annihilation to save him alone.

We will have him to fight the monsters like his Holy Knights subordinates who died earlier.

"Plug your ears~?"

I heard the catkin girl's voice clearly in my ears.

I looked around, thinking that she might have jumped out of the shelter out of fear, but there were only soldiers around.

"It's coming~?"

I had a bad feeling about it and blocked my ears with both my hands. Right after, my body felt like it got beaten all over.

Soldiers who failed to plug their ears squirmed on the ground.

This is bad, we've got to intercept the monsters even if we're the only one left!

I slip into the magic archer seat and look for the enemy.

"What's going on?"

There is no monster, not even one?

"Fie, fie, fie~?"

I chased after the faint carefree voice and turned my sight there.

A golden colored ball jumped about amongst the crawling monsters on the ground, finishing them off one after another.

I know that.

That's the Golden Knight who appeared in the Royal Capital during the greater demon attack.

Golden Knights, the attendants of Hero Nanashi, have come to the rescue!

"Now's the time, pull the idiot in front of the gate in!"

By the fort commander's order, the gate opened and the Shiga Eight Sword candidate entered.

『Hurry up. A big one is coming.』

『Aye~? Bunshin no Jutsu~?』

The golden ball--the small Golden Knight split into many, and finished the monsters all at once.

A slightly taller Golden Knight is glaring at the south mountaintop with a white spear on their hand.

Huge.

Huge enough that you can see it with naked eyes even from here.

It's too huge for a Naga.

Moreover, it has two heads.

『Be glad, Pink. That is the 『Feathered Serpent (Kukulcan)』.』

『Excellent~』

The small pink mantled Golden Knight is dancing and jumping for joy with folding fans-like things on their hands.

Don't tell me, they're going to fight that legendary monsters with just the two of them?

『I don't think we cannot beat it, but we have to be careful not to injure it badly and ruin the meat.』

『Aye!』

『It pains me to do this, but let us call Master.』

I heard those voices intermittently.

The next moment, a door opened beside the two Golden Knights, and a white robed boy with purple hair appeared.

That's--.

""""HERO NANASHI!""""

Hero Nanashi waved back at the cheers from the fort and then he went toward the huge enemy along with his two attendants.

There's not even speck of anxiety or fear oozing from him.
Truly a hero.

"Hero-sama."

"Don't lose."

The soldiers and knights inside the fort stared at the back of Hero Nanashi like praying.

We are witnessing history in the making.

Let us watch over Hero Nanashi and Golden Knights' fierce battle against the legendary monster [Feathered Serpent (Kukulcan)] without missing even a sec.

That's the only thing the powerless like us could do.

The Feathered Serpent (Kukulcan) glared at Hero Nanashi and then flames overflowed out of its two heads.

--Eh?

Kukulcan's heads disappeared.

The lifeless body of the falling Kukulcan also vanished.

What just happened?

"Fini~shed~, mission comple~te~?"

"The fight is over. We will be taking half of the Nagas and the Gale Wolf's bodies."

Two Golden Knights who appeared on the the fort's wall before anyone knew it said that to us.

"You're free to have the rest. It'll be bad if the meat get spoiled, make sure to drain the blood out as soon as possible."

No, wait a moment.

This wasn't a daily scene like worrying about spoiled meat or something was it?

What about the fierce battle?

What about witnessing history?

Somebody clapped my shoulder as I was getting confused.

It's the head chef Kozun.

"We narrowly escaped death huh."

"Y-yeah."

Right, that's right.

The Golden Knights had disappeared when I looked up, and Hero Nanashi had also vanished from the battlefield.

--Oh crap."

I forgot to say my gratitude to our saviors.

"Let's get those meat and magic cores. This fort's emergency magic stones have decreased by half from the fight just now."

"...You're right."

Together with head chef Kozun, I went outside the fort with dismantling tools.

Heaps of monsters were everywhere.

"Heroes are awesome."

"Yeah, with this much difference, I can't even feel envious."

I'm going to say my thanks the next time we meet.

That's why, let me be glad to have survived, and actually feel my life while eating some good meat at least for today.

I only realized that the lizardkinn and the catkin girls who should have evacuated underground had gone when I was going to call them for dinner.

I don't know where they've gone, but I'm sure they will be fine.

That's the hunch I have.

I'll treat them as many meals as my wallet allows the next time I see them again.

15-Intermission 10. Ruin Exploration

*

※ Not from Satou's POV either this time.

People who aren't familiar with Yasaku the explorer, please look at the afterword.

This turned out oddly longer than planned, please excuse me as this is the last one before Chapter 16.

"Drop dead, you crane fly!"

The arrow I shot hit the enemy right in the forehead.

"Yasaku, harpies aren't bugs y'know."

"To begin wiiiith, there's no bug called crane flyyy."

Tan the magic swordsman cuts down the incoming harpy, then priest Kyura's pole mace crushes the fallen harpy's head.

--Seriously?

No, I'm sure it was in the line Ancestor King-sama said when he shot down a flying wyvern in the legend.

"You guys don't know that. Crane fly must exist."

As if reacting to me, several harpies perching on top of the cliff sing all at once.

--LULULRRRRUUULU.

"Yasaku, Charm incoming!"

"Ou! <<DISTURB>> Blue Magic Bow."

Blue Magic Bow in my hand shined red, and the arrow shot from it demolished the harpies' charming voice.

Jeez, I ain't gonna fight my charmed friends in this narrow path.

"The ruin should be around here according to the map..."

"Stop fooling around and help, you!"

In this situation where we're being surrounded by a flock of harpies, lightning magician Sheriona nonchalantly unfolds the map.

"Ain't this the best time for your flashy magic to get to work!"

"Ah, no no, baaad. Yasakuuu, you should properly listen to what others are sayiiiing."

"We told you that the rocks in this gorge are combustible didn't we."

The two women reproached me.

Felt like even the harpies joined in to ridicule me.

"Shut up, shut up, shut up!"

I shot down the harpies one after another with superhuman speed.

The flock finally ran away after I routed around 20 harpies.

"Ah, so tired."

I lean my back on the ground, takes the water bag on my waist and moisten my mouth.

Arid wind of the gorge quickly dried my sweat, but it was far from pleasant due to the weird bad odor it carried.

I put my mana into desalinating magic tool and refill the water bag with water.

It's an expensive magic tool (consumable goods), but it's indispensable when exploring desolate places.

"Geez, mr. Kelten sure got us some pesky quest."

I chew the salty hard dried meat, chowing down the dull tasteless meal. We could have cooked harpy meat, but having a barbecue party at a place like this might invite some strong monster out of nowhere. Only eccentric nobles and careless beginners would do such a suicidal act.

"You're one to talk."

"Indeed. Yasaku, you were the one who jumped on this quest first thing first weren't you."

I push away my past memory to oblivion and gaze at the magnificent gorge.

This place is a great canyon at the boundary of a territory under direct control of the king, far south-southwest from the Labyrinth City. We came to this remote place by the request of Marquis Kelten in the Royal Capital.

If we don't get back to the Labyrinth City soon, people might think that we've kicked the bucket in the middle of this journey.

"Weird. The ruin's entrance should be around here according to the map."
"You sure you're not missing any mark?"

Sheriona dropped the bag on her back, took out an ancient document and turned the pages.

I peeked from her side, but since I couldn't read ancient language at all, I only reconfirmed once.



"Did you hear that?"

Tan muttered and dubiously looked around at the surroundings.
I strained my ears and heard a faint goat cry-like sound, "Meeee."

I peeked below the cliff and found a stranded goatling on a ledge far down.

Since the wire I fitted on my arms can't reach it, I take out a rope from my knapsack and tie it to a mountain-side rock.

"What a whimsical guy."

"Ain't it fine, we're free till we find a clue from the ancient document anyway right?"

Besides, if I save it when it's still young, it might come back when it's ripe for eating.

I wind the rope on my waist and get down the cliff.

That happened when I got halfway through.

The rock my right hand was grasping came off with a thud.

"Whoa."

One bad thing after another, right at the same time, the foothold under my left leg collapsed.

I desperately look around while sliding down the steep.

Found a handy-looking dead tree slightly far away.

"There!"

I shoot the wire on my right hand at the dead tree.

--Missed.

"Goddammit!"

I twist my body and shoot the wire on my left hand.

--Missed, again.

The wire passed the dead tree in vain.

"■■■■ Cube"

I heard Tan's voice up above and then a transparent magical pedestal appeared below me.

I landed on the magical pedestal and managed to cling to it somehow.

"You saved my ass, Tan!"

"I can't keep it for long. Find a foothold quick!"

Looks like handsome men are also capable men.

Just like me.

Afterward, I got down the cliff without problem, and reached the panicking goatling.

While taking a deep breath, I roll back the useless wires, and refill the launcher magic tool.

"...Mee"

The goatling got scared when it saw me and edged back while crying

feebly.

It's about to fall off the ledge.

"Good boy. Don't move okay."

I approach it with coaxing voice, but there's no effect whatsoever.

Whenever the goatling stepped back, pebbles and soils fell off the ledge.

"It stands to reason, Yasaku's face is that of a carnivore."

"He only ever eats meat in the city after all."

I could hear Tan and priest Kyura's interruption above the cliff.

"Oh shut it!"

"Meeeeeee"

I reflexively shouted, the goatling got scared and lost its footing on the ledge.

"Nmeeeeeee"

The goatling's scream that sounded like its last echoed in the gorge.

"Uh oh!"

I shot the wire on my arm at once.

"--Phew."

Third time's the charm as the wire gets the job done this time.

I reel the wire while being careful not to break it and put the goatling back on top of the ledge.

"...Mee"

"Geez, you're one little trouble."

I lie at the ledge while hugging the trembling goatling.

"The heck's that?"

I felt something odd from the rock face at the back.

"Yasaku! Did you find something!?"

"Wait a sec!"

I approach the rock cliff while holding the goatling.

"Branch growing out of a rock...."

My stretched hand slipped through the rock.

"Whoa"

I pulled it back in a hurry, the hand under the glove was the same as always.

--It's an illusion.

I readied myself and plunged into the rock face first.

There's a shallow cave inside, with a hidden door even.

Looks like this is the entrance we're looking for.

I came back to the ledge and called my friends aloud.



"You think Goatsuke safely got back home to his parents?"

I muttered while shooting down a vampire bat swooping down from the ceiling.

The ruin's ceiling is so high that even Tan's force magic [Magic Lamp]'s light can't reach it.

"He's fiine. We droove away the goat-eaaating harpiees."

"You're right. Goatsuke must be jumping up and down energetically in the mountain now."

When I was talking with priest Kyura while fighting, a point blank electric shock ran through.

"Oy, watch it!"

When I complained to lightning magician Sheriona, she pointed behind me with a nice smile on her face.

"Geh, Wall Slime."

"Jeez, you two aren't beginners, don't lose your focus when exploring."

"I'm ashamed of myself."

"Sorryy."

I took out a molotov out of my bag and hurled it at the slime, burning it. There's no way one bottle of this is enough to burn the resistant slime down, but as the fire-hating slime gets burned, it runs away into a crack in the wall.

I thoroughly check the narrow passage while surmounting standard traps and poisonous scorpions.

"Suspended ceilings, pitfalls, filling the passage with electricity when you push a button, can't believe this guy put all these."

"It seems like the designer of this place likes to make traps as a hobby."

"There's even chain reaction traps."

"Traps are nothing much. Yasaku will disarm them anyway--"

Like hell they are.

Just how nerve wrecking do you think disarming even one of them is.

--The real problem is that this magic facility is functioning."

"According to the legend, this should have been a magic facility from 600 years ago. Simply maintaining the fixture magic is one thing, but normally, things that consume mana like electric traps should have been halted."

"It seems, the monsters invaaaded through the ventilations and settled dooown on their own."

True, the monsters we met so far were all slimes or small ones.

"I can feel magic power from below."

"Tan, use detection magic."

"Acknowledged."

Believing Sheriona's intuition, I asked Tan who could use force magic to inspect it closely.

If there were someone who could use wind magic and the rare space magic, detecting things would be easier, but in a case like this, force magic that can be used to pull in mana isn't inferior to them.

After finishing the chant, Tan concentrated with eyes closed.

"It's quite deep."

Sweat ran down Tan's face.

"Strong magic power."

Tan opened his eyes and wiped the sweat using his sleeve.

"There's a chance that there's a large magic furnace usually used in a fort or a large airship, or perhaps a powerful monster."

"You serious--"

The fact that the ruin hasn't died is a happy miscalculation, but in case of the latter, we might end up having to fight an unbelievably strong monster.

"What should we do, Yasaku? Go back?"

"Pshaw, 'course we're gonna see it to the end."

We wouldn't have been explorers, if we turned tail and ran here. People like that would have bought a farmland and slaves with money from exploring labyrinths, and lived their life in ease and comfort.

"Umu, let's go. Toward the unknown."

Tan spoke unenthusiastically.

It doesn't sound like a sarcasm when a guy with a good face said that, awesome.

"Then, leet's gooo. Sherii, which wayyy to the manaaa?"

"That way."

We go toward where the magic power Sheriona sensed.

"It's wide, is that dark place a pitfall?"

While muttering, I put a fire on a torch I took from my waist and throw it at the darkness.

The torch drew an arch, rebounded on the floor once and fell into the deep

darkness.

"Seems quite deep. Will the rope be long enough?"

"It appears we don't need it."

"Yasaku, look at that."

Sheriona and Tan pointed at the ceiling, toward an elevator-like thing.

We created footholds to reach the elevator using Tan's force magic [Cube], but for some reason I had to crawl into the elevator along those footholds.

Geez, these guys sure are rough with their leader.

The elevator's lever was a bit rusty, but I managed to make it work by putting a little power into it.

I lower the elevator to where my friends are waiting and descend down while taking turn to operate the handle lever.

"It's clear now that we're down here."

"Yeah, even I know this. This vibration must be magic furnace."

The lowest floor has three passages, we're advancing in one of them.

This passage is also full of traps just like the one above. We're pressing forward with similar hardships like before.

Since it was bothersome, excepts traps that activated by themselves, I only put marks on the places that became the switches for those traps while we passed them.

There were several rooms along the way, but there wasn't even a hint of treasures at all.

We arrived before a huge door before long.

"About time for something to appear."

"Yeah, don't let your guard down."

Just as we had guessed, there was a functioning magic furnace ahead. The wall on one side has been broken, revealing rocks of the same color as the valley rock's.

Seems like there's no powerful monster we had feared.

"Weird."

"Yea--"

We nodded at Sheriona's word as we looked up at the buzzing magic furnace.

The magic furnace here is a type that has a particularly high output.

That's fine.

Since the majority of magic furnaces are of this type.

However, in order to maintain this type of furnace, it needs to be feed with a large quantity of magic stones.

Even if it has a magic stone silo and an automatic loading function, it isn't something that fits a desolate place old enough to be called ruin.

"It appears that it has only been restarted recently."

Sheriona reported after checking the back of the installation.

The magic stone silo connected to the automatic loading installation is huge, the current scale seems to be enough to operate the furnace for about three months.

Additionally, it seems there's a ladder hidden behind it.

It probably connects to the floor where we found the elevator.

"Then I guess the treasures have been taken away..."

"I wouldn't be so sure about that."

Sheriona spoke full of confidence to reply the dejected me.

She tells me the answer when I look at her.

"The magic stones would have been taken away if that was the case."

"Riiight, that maaany magic stones would have feeetch good money."

Priest Kyura agreed with Sheriona.

After taking a break, we choose the second passage.

This time it's a direction with the lowest concentration of mana.

"It's a miss huh."

"Yeah, I can see that."

There were only debris and junks lying around inside a huge warehouse-like room.

Judging from the neglected foundations, this was probably a port for large airships.

The port gate at the ceiling is grown with tree branch-like things, leaving an impression that it hasn't been opened for a long time.

There's a door for goods transport on the right, but it's warped and can't be opened, and the passage seen from a gap on it is buried with rock and sand.

"Not good. Let's go to the next one."

"Yes."

I call out to my friends while wiping the rust on my hand.

Judging from the direction, that goods transport door should be connected

to the last passage.



And at the last passage.

There was a residential area beyond that, with brutal natives lying in wait.

"Kyura!"

"■■ Purification (Turn Undead)!"

The Wraiths inside the room received holy magic from priest Kyura who's holding a holy symbol, and they ascended.

When it's Kyura that does it, the intonation sounds like slow [Tuurn, undeeead].

Can't believe the magic still works.

We've searched more than 30 rooms, but every one of them was littered with undead.

One thing they have in common is the old clothes they're wearing, most are of Skeletons, Ghosts, Wights, Wraiths, and Mummies.

"I raan out of manaaa."

"... ■■ <<Chain Lightning>>"

Sheriona's attack magic smashes a crowd of Wight in the passage.

Tan's force magic isn't well suited against undead, so he's opting to cut them down using a magic edge coated magic sword.

"Yasakuu, any potioon leeeft?"

"I've got one mana recovery potion."

I hand over the last mid-mana recovery potion to her.

I'm also running out of mana, but Kyura's holy magic is our top priority to pass through this den of undead.

Afterward, we passed through 12 rooms, and arrived in a hall with a huge door right when the four of us had run out of mana recovery potion.

"The door screams that the ruin master is waiting inside."

"Yeah, it really does."

I look at my friends faces one by one.

Nice expressions they have there.

No one is thinking of retreating here.

"Let's go! Gimme a hand, Tan."

Tan and I push the huge door.



"--There it is."

That thing is inside a place that's even wider than the warehouse earlier.

"That's the legendary...."

Tan's voice who usually sounds aloof is shaking.

"Holy Living Armor."

Sheriona muttered while looking dumbfounded.

It looks the same as the statue of Ancestor King-sama in the royal capital's plaza.

"It's huuugeee."

Kyura spoke like usual.

This girl might be the real big shot.

"Ah, it's huge alright."

It's 10 times as big as me, three times bigger than the kingdom's giant golem.

In the Ancestor King-sama's legend, it was sometimes depicted to be only twice as big as me, and sometimes it towered over the super huge Heavenly Dragon's head as it commanded the army, deciding which one is true was a source of debate among scholars, but it seems that dispute will be over now.

"I wonder if the magic furnace earlier was for that thing?"

"Yeah, you're probably right."

The Holy Living Armor is surrounded by metal scaffoldings, pulsing pipes clad with mana light coming from the ceilings are attached to the Holy Living Armor.

Kyura's nonchalant voice reached my ears.

"Thaaat's, strange."

Kyura stared at a space on the right side of the Holy Living Armor.

"Yeah, what's that space?"

"It is strange."

Just as Tan and Sheriona said, there's a vacant space where another Holy Living Armor could have been put.

It's as if there was another Holy Living Armor on that place.

"Now then, what to do, Yasaku?"

"Well, not like we have--"

I look at the surroundings to answer Tan.

This huge maintenance warehouse blows through four underground floors, and we're currently on the third floor.

Of course, that Holy Living Armor is on the lowest first floor.

I looked around and found a suspicious protrusion on the second floor.

"Tan, don't you think that magic device over there look suspicious?"

"You're right. That looks like it's asking to be fiddled."

There's a floating light globe, control panels and chairs surround it. Fortunately, there's no one here.

"Looks like we can get down there. Let's take a look."

We get down the maintenance ladder toward the floor below.

"Don't dawdle and get down."

"Hey! Don't look up!"

"Don't speak like a maiden you!"

"No matter how oold they are, women are aaall maiden you knooow."

"Don't speak like I'm an elderly!"

We might have been too careless.

With clattering noises, the floorboards in the passage between us and the

control panel peeled off and formed into angular crab golems.

"What the heck are those!"

"History book states that Holy Living Armor commanded countless golems."

"Why are you so calm."

As we were joking around, the floorboard golem's number keeps increasing.

"R-Retreat! Like hell we're fighting dozens of golems and increasing."

Sheriona's huge ass obstructed when I tried to climb the ladder.

We should manage to climb the ladder to the end as Tan's force magic Flexible Shield prevented the golems from climbing it.

"Hold it, don't touch my butt."

"Fool! Now's not the time for that!"

I gave up pushing her from behind and decided to support Tan with Blue Magic Bow.

"Tan, make an opening with Flexible Shield--<<DISTURB>> Blue Magic Bow!"

While resounding like a whistling arrow, the arrow shot from the Blue Magic Bow cut across the golems.

Golems whose mana got disturbed from the inside twitched, shook, and fell off the ladder.

"Haha, good things that they were construct-type monsters."

"Yasaku, let's climb up while we can."

"Course."

It could only buy us some time, but it bought us enough time to flee from the ladder where we couldn't fight freely.



"Yasaku, they're catching up!"

"Geez, stubborn bastards."

They caught up to us as we passed through the undead residential area. For some reason, the elevator couldn't be used to go up, so we went to the magic furnace room to use the hidden ladder.

"Haaa, haaa, I caaan't."

"Me too, I can't, anymore."

Putting me and Tan aside, Sheriona the magician and Kyura the priest ran out of breath.

If this keeps up, they won't be able to use magic when the golems catch up.

A certain thing caught my eyes at that time.

"--Yasaku?"

"Go ahead of me!"

I urged my friends to go ahead and glared at the clacking incoming wood golems.

"Eat this, damn you!"

I hit the [Mark of Trap] on the wall.

The falling ceilings crush the golems.

"Hmph, don't underestimate human-sama's wis--dom?"

The thick ceiling that hit the floorboard golems shook.
Looks like they aren't broken yet even after getting crushed.

"Are you for real!"

Moreover, the second wave of floorboard golems are coming from the passage.

"Cya!"

I shot a Blue Magic Bow's arrow at the passage and chased after my friends.

"Yasaku! Here!"

I could hear their voice from above the magic furnace room.
They're waving their hands in front of a hidden door above the ladder.

Looks like they're waiting for me above the ladder.

I jump onto the rusted ladder as I desperately run from the floorboard golems.

--Geh.

The ladder cracked and broke right in front of my eyes.
I desperately climbed up as the ladder fell and fire the wire on my hand at the remaining ladder on the wall.

"Aw yeaaaah!"

The wire splendidly entwined the ladder on the wall as the falling ladder hit the wriggling floorboard golems below.

I'm a man who can do it at times of need.

"Yasaku, hurry up!"

I looked back as prompted by Tan and saw the floorboard golems climbing up using their selves as the scaffold.

I frantically move my limbs to climb the ladder.

"This is bad, they will catch up to us at this rate."

"Can't you clamp down the door with your force magic, Tan?"

"Bad idea. They'll just destroy the wall with number."

"Oooh nooo."

I look around inside the magic furnace room.

As long as you don't give up, the thing needed to reverse the situation is everywhere.

"Sheri, how about making that magic furnace explode with your magic?"

"We'll die too if we do that."

"What if we use Tan's magic to clamp down the hidden door?"

"Won't make it in time."

Then, we should use something to induce secondary explosion--that's it!

"Sheri shoot your magic at the rock!"

"Roock?"

"Yasaku?"

Looks like even the quick-witted guys can't catch on.

"This rock is the same as the valley's rock."

"I see! It's combustible!"

"Yasakuu, you're being unusuallyyyy, smaaart."

"Unusually is one word too many!"

After getting it, Sheriona chants an attack magic, Tan also chants force magic and remains on stand by.

"... ■■ <<Chain Lightning>>"

Snake-like lightning falls on the rock.

With a small spark, the magic furnace room is filled with flash and roaring sounds.

I quickly close the hidden door and Tan locked it with Fixture magic. In addition, Kyura the priest reinforced the hidden door with a strong defensive magic.

Earsplitting thunderous sounds and vibrations assaulted us.

Dust pours down the ceiling, creaking sounds echo from the passage joints.

Intermittent roaring sounds continued on, and just when the ceilings look like they were about to fall down, silence finally came.

Since we couldn't touch the hidden door due to heat, we advanced on the hidden passage and went back to the first floor.

We sent a pigeon golem to Marquis Kelten to report our finding of the ruin, and waited until next morning to recover our mana, afterward, we went inside the ruin once again.



"Amaaazing."

"It's a heap of wreckage."

Since the elevator broke down, we looked for another passage and came to the lowest floor.

Just as magician Sheriona, and priest Kyura said, the underground passage is littered with wreckage of floorboard golems and walls that there's no place to put your foot on.

There were some golems that had little damage among them, so Tan and I broke their limbs just in case.

"Looks like it's fine."

"Seems about right."

We went back to the Holy Living Armor room and went to where the control unit was, it didn't look like there would be any more floorboard golem appearing.

Since the magic furnace is destroyed, the Holy Living Armor and the warehouse automatic defense function probably have been halted.

"So, how are we going to carry the Holy Living Armor out?"

Sheriona points at the ceiling.

"Looks like the ceiling can be opened."

"How?"

"Isn't it working by the mana supplied from the magic furnace?"

--Ah.

I noticed it from that reply.

We had to destroy the magic furnace in order to eliminate the floorboard golems.

"...Checkmate."

We've got no choice but to report to Marquis Kelten and ask him to transport this thing.

We went back to above ground in order to send the spare pigeon golem.

"Meeee"

Goatsuke who was eating grass with his parents on top of the cliff sounded happy when he saw me.

That Goatsuke and his parents suddenly looked up at the sky.

Lured by them, I also looked above, several beautiful sunlights pierced through the thick clouds.

"I wonder what is this sound?"

"It sounds sooo niiice."

"Where is it from?"

We heard mystical bell sounds from the rift between clouds.

<<<TAKE HEED>>>

Overpowering voice fell from the sky.

I instinctively went down on my knees and lowered my head.

Looks like it's not just me, my friends are doing the same too.

I listen carefully to the voice falling from the sky.

It was the voice of god, informing people about the Divine Punishment.

"Looks like the age of turmoil is upon us."

"Yes, that appears to be the case."

"If it uuuss, no matter the plaaace, no matter the aaaage, we will be fiiine."

Looks like the dream of spending the days in ease and comfort at the capital for having discovered Ancestor King-sama's relic has to be postponed.

Really--.

"Geez."

I muttered and released the second pigeon golem into the sky.

Credits

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